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RELIGIOUS TRACTS,

DISPERSED BY THE

SOCIETY

FOR

PROMOTING

CHRISTIAN

KNOWLEDGE.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

LONDON:

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BOOKSELLERS TO THE SOCIETY,
NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD,
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AN EARNEST AND AFFECTIONATE

ADDRESS

TO THE

COMMON PEOPLE

OF

ENGLAND,

Concerning their

USUAL RECREATIONS

ON

SHROVE TUESDAY.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR F. AND C. RIVINGTON, BOOKSELLERS TO THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD;

By Bye and Law, St. John's Square, Clerkenwell.

1800.

Price 1d. or 6s. a Hundred.

My dear Friends and Countrymen,

PERMIT me to address myself to You at this Season, and to expostulate with you in a loving, friendly Manner, concerning the abominable Practice of *Throwing at Cocks*, and to beseech you to set a good Example this Year, by leaving off so bad a Custom. I am no Enemy, I do assure You, to *reasonable* and *manly* Recreations. I could wish, that *pitching the Bar*, *throwing the Sledge*, or a *weighty Stone*, *Leaping* and *Wrestling*, and such like Sports, were more in Use. They tend to Health and Strength; they inspire Courage and Activity; and would contribute to make Us an hardy, stout Race of Men, such as our Fore-fathers were. But *Cock-Throwing* is a most UNMANLY and CRUEL Diversion, a SHAME, and a Reproach to our Country, and OFFENSIVE to GOD.

GIVE me leave to tell You, my dear Countrymen, that it is a most UNMANLY Diversion. For what *Trial of Manhood*, or what *Proof of Strength* or *Activity* is there, in overcoming a poor Creature that can make no Resistance, and has

not so much as the Power of running away?—What *Glory* would it be to beat a Person, and to insult over him, when he is your Prisoner, chained down, and lying at your Mercy? And, let me add, What Need is there at all to place a *living* Creature as a *Mark* to be thrown at, which has *Sense* and *Feeling* as well as You and I, seeing that a Stick or a Stone would have done as well?

IT is likewise a most CRUEL and BARBAROUS Diversion. FOR it is the very Height of Cruelty to cause a poor *innocent* Creature, that never gave You any Provocation, to suffer *lingering Tortures* for mere Sport and Wantonness. WHETHER the Creature is hit or missed at each Throw, You raise in it the most inconceivable Anguish. For even if You miss it, You put it into dreadful *Fears* and *Agonies*; and if You hit it, You *mangle* and *bruise*, as well as *affright* it. And what shocking Pastime is this, to make the *Fears*, *Cries*, *Pains*, *Wounds*, and *Agonies* of any Thing that has *Sense* and *Feeling*, the Object of One's *Mirth* and *Diversion!*

PERHAPS You will say, That You did not consider the Matter in that View. But whether You did or not, You cannot

but acknowledge, that You were sensible the Creature felt Pain, and shewed, by all the Ways it was capable, how miserable and distressed it was in that Situation.—How often have you seen it endeavour to *avoid* the Stroke as it was coming? How often have you heard it cry out, as well as it could, beseeching, as it were, Your Pity and Compassion? And if it could have spoke, how justly might it have reproached you for want of Tenderness and Humanity?—It would have been an Act of Mercy in you to have dispatched it at *One* Blow.—But *Cock-Throwing* is of so *cruel* a Nature, that the *longer* the poor Creature is kept alive in Pain and Misery, the *better* and *more Sport*.

SURELY then, the *Continuance* of such a *barbarous* Diversion must necessarily be a very great SHAME and REPROACH to our Country. What can *Strangers* and *Foreigners* think of Us, when they see, or are told of such *Unmanly* and *Cruel* Sports?—Indeed, if You will bear to hear Truth and plain Dealing, it is on the Account of such Diversions as these, that they give Us abroad the Character of a *Blood-thirsty* and *Inhuman* People.—And as long as these Sports continue, is

there

there not too much Reason for the Charge? And should they conclude, that at the Bottom we have not that *Bravery* and *Courage* which we pretend to; we must confess, that We Ourselves are the Cause of such a Suspicion, by shewing, that we take so much Delight in *Cruelty* and *Barbarity*. For it has been observed, that *Cowardice* and *Cruelty* generally go together: Whereas *Generosity* and *Humanity* are the sure Proofs of a *brave* and *dauntless* Mind. It must be a bitter *Reproach* to Us, that We have a Custom still kept up among us so *cruel* and *inhuman*, unknown to the most *Savage* and *Barbarous* Nations. The *Turks* are remarkably Compassionate and Kind towards *dumb Creatures*;—Oh, that it could be said, We were so in *England!*

But above all, my dear Countrymen, such a Diversion as this is highly offensive to Almighty GOD. It hath pleased Him, out of his great Bounty, to give Us *all* the Creatures for our Use and Service; but We have not a Permission to abuse *any* of them. A *Righteous Man*, saith the Scripture, *regardeth the Life of his Beast*. Every *Good Man* therefore will be careful not to *over-work* his *Cattle*,

…, by continual Labour: He will allow …em Times of *Ease* and *Refreshment*: …e will not feed them *poorly* or *pinch*…*gly*; They shall have what is proper and …fficient: Much less will he *beat* and …*buse* them *unnecessarily*, or make them …*train* under an *unconscionable Load*, be…ond their Strength. And a *Good Man*, …hen he is to kill any Beast for *Food*, …ill dispatch him in as *speedy* a Manner, …nd put him to as *little* Pain as he *possibly* …*an*.

Now, dear Sirs, judge for Yourselves, whether a *Cock-Thrower* deserves the Character of a *Righteous* or *Good Man*. Doth he regard the *Life of that poor Creature*? Is he *merciful* to it? Doth he *treat* that Creature of God as God *intended* he should, when He gave Us the Use of all his Creatures? And can You think, that he will not be answerable for the *Cruelty* and *Barbarity* he exercises in that Respect!—I might add likewise, how *unsuitable* such a Practice is to the *Beginning* of *Lent*; a Time more particularly set apart for solemn *Repentance* and *Humiliation*, and for *breaking off* all *evil* Practices and *sinful* Dispositions.

But I am satisfied, my dear Countrymen, You are thoroughly convinced in

Your

Your Conſciences, by what has been already ſaid, that you ought to *leave off* this *barbarous* and *deteſtable* Cuſtom. And let me beſeech You earneſtly to do it. Take in good Part what has been ſaid; for it is *honeſtly* and *well-intended*. It is a glorious Thing to correct One's Errors, and to grow wiſer and better; and this Glory will be Yours, if You will lead the Way, and ſhew a good Example this Year, by *diſcontinuing* a Cuſtom, which has every Thing in it that deſerves to be forſaken and abhorred. There is no SHAME in *reforming* a bad Practice; but it is a very great SHAME, and a great SIN to *continue* in it, after it is *known* to be *bad*. An *Engliſhman* has many *good* Qualities in him: He is naturally *brave*, *generous*, and *compaſſionate*. For God's Sake therefore, for the Sake of Your *Ownſelves*, *and for the Honour* of Your *Country*, do not *diſgrace* ſo many good Qualities, by *one unmanly*, *cruel*, *ſhameful*, and *wicked* Practice of *Cock-Throwing*.

FINIS.

Printed by Bye and Law, St. John's Square, Clerkenwell.

2.

CONSIDERATIONS

UPON THE

USE AND ABUSE

OF

OATHS

JUDICIALLY TAKEN.

PARTICULARLY IN RESPECT TO

PERJURY.

By the Rev. ROBERT POOL FINCH, D.D.

PREBENDARY OF WESTMINSTER, AND RECTOR OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST IN THAT CITY.

"HE WHO SWEARETH AS HE WHO FEARETH AN OATH."

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. F. AND C. RIVINGTON, N° 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

M DCC LXXXIX.


BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

Tho. Butterworth Bayley, Eſq; F.R.S.

OF HOPE, NEAR MANCHESTER.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN you favoured me with your laſt obliging viſit, a converſation aroſe relative to the Society for promoting CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE; to which, after repeated benefactions, you have given your very reſpectable teſtimony as a ſubſcribing member.

You remarked, with great juſtice, upon the excellent proviſion made by it, from an abundant variety of well-

adapted tracts, for the inſtruction and benefit of mankind in every view of moſt ſubſtantial good, temporal and eternal.

One omiſſion, however, ſtruck you, which, from the goodneſs of your heart as a true, practical, believer in the glorious contents of the Goſpel, and from your experience, as a vigilant and conſcientious magiſtrate was, indeed, very proper to be noticed: I mean, what you will from your earneſtneſs readily recollect, ſome treatiſe ſuited to popular uſe upon the ſubject of Oaths, and particularly pointed as a diſſuaſive from and a guard againſt that dreadful and predominant crime called Perjury. Which no man of eſtabliſhed principle can think of without trembling, and nothing but extreme ignorance, or abandoned bold-

boldneſs, can be induced to commit. As I had a fullneſs of feeling with you upon this melancholy topic, not truſting to my memory, though likely in this inſtance to be correct, I ſearched our catalogue, and do not find that proviſion, which is ſo deſirable. In failure of it, ſuch Conſiderations are here ſuggeſted as, it is hoped, may tend, under certain circumſtances, to convince and controul the human mind. That this may be the good effect of your hint upon ſo very important a ſubject is the fervent wiſh of One long and earneſtly devoted to the Society's Service, and ambitious of your Eſteem as an affectionate Friend,

The AUTHOR.

WESTMINSTER,
OCT. 16, 1788.

CONSIDERATIONS

UPON THE

USE AND ABUSE

OF

OATHS, &c.

THE Rights and Enjoyments of mankind, conſidered in a ſocial ſtate, that is, a ſtate of mutual connection, dependence, and ſubordination, which is the only rational deſcription of creatures circumſtanced as they are, require a variety of proviſion in order

to the preſervation and ſtability of them. For, ſo it is, the irregularities growing out of their own abuſed nature and ſituation make ſuch aids and inſtruments unavoidably neceſſary to counteract the bad influence of Folly and Vice. One main expedient, and indeed, the ultimate and moſt effective, is the uſe of OATHS, which, not merely aſſertory or promiſſory between man and man for the ſecurity of particular confidence, but judicial and public, upon trials reſpecting property and life, hath been adopted and countenanced by all civilized Nations. To which practice, ſo obvious to REASON, there can be no doubt but REVELATION did always, and does certainly now, under the laſt diſpenſation of God's will, give a fullneſs of ſanction. If this was a clear point under Patriarchal government and the Moſaic law, with the concurring force of precept and practice as then prevailing, it is under the Goſpel ſtill more authoritatively and deciſively fixed and exemplified; in compliance with what we are moſt ſolemnly aſſured of, that God, having no *greater*, either perſon or tribunal, with whom or where to lodge an appeal, " ſware

by

by himſelf." Vain in the very worſt ſenſe, as ſuch appeals to gods, falſely ſo called, the fictions of mens minds, or the works of their hands muſt be, thoſe made with becoming ſolemnity to the one living, ſelf-exiſting, true God, muſt be convincingly proper and profitably operative in their tendency. It does not appear, therefore, that the Iſraelites were ever condemned becauſe they ſwore by HIM. The condemnation was for ſwearing by them who were no gods. Herod, though a profligate man, conſidered an oath as a ſolemn ſanction, and was hurried into a wanton proſtitution of it, when he barbarouſly ſacrificed the life of John the Baptiſt to the extravagance of his admiration for the daughter of Herodias. Herod, in this caſe, kept his word to a fault, becauſe his oath was not conformable to the will and command of God. He ſhould not have ſwore. Having done ſo, he ſhould have repented, and not executed his horrid purpoſe upon that unwarrantable pretence. It cannot reaſonably be accounted an offence to the Creator himſelf to make uſe of his name on ſolemn occaſions; becauſe, when attended with reve-

rence and ſincerity, it is the moſt expreſſive acknowledgment of his ſovereignty and our dependence; an open recognition of his omnipotence, juſtice, wiſdom, and truth. A ſufficient ground therefore for an injunction to his people, that they ſhould ſwear by Him and his Name. Nothing but the weakneſs of idle ſcruple, or the obſtinacy of blind perverſeneſs, can heſitate about a compliance with what is thus ſurroundingly juſtified by declaration, by conſent, and by habit. The ground of this cuſtom, as was before intimated, is certainly to be lamented, however indiſpenſible its application; for its neceſſity ariſes from that aptneſs to ſtart from the rule of right, which is the effect of a freedom of action eſſential to human nature. But, *this* being permitted by Him who made us, ſurely, it is a part of wiſdom to provide for the controul of it by every ſuitable and coercive mean, ſuch eſpecially as moſt commands reverence and checks the preſumption of raſh and daring impiety. The cauſe therefore of righteouſneſs and truth, which the Lord from heaven profeſſedly deſcended to maintain, is ſo repreſented in his own con-

conduct *, and ſo recommended to that of others, that there can be no doubt of ſolemn judicial ſwearing, or, in other words, of an oath legally and officially taken, being not only allowable, but in certain caſes laudable and right, as *that* which is ſuppoſed to be irreſiſtibly binding upon the conſciences of mankind, and as giving full and final force to their ſeveral obligations. There is in this reſpect, amongſt Chriſtians, an almoſt univerſal conſent. One ſect indeed of a pecu-

* Our Lord, indeed, may be ſaid, not ſo properly to *ſwear* as to *be ſworn*, (Matt. xxvi. 23.) "I adjure thee by the living God," ſaid the high prieſt. But though that bleſſed Perſon was ſo ingenuous as to anſwer directly and moſt affirmatively; bearing witneſs to the truth, being, as he declared, the great end of his coming into the world; yet, ſince cavils may ariſe about this method of adjuring, the tie ſeems to be firmer and more indiſſoluble, when the oath is *actively* adminiſtered agreeably to our own practice. Hence ariſes a particular argument for endeavouring to ſupport the ſolemnity and reverence which are due to it, and ſuch as ſhould alarm all perſons in authority, leſt by a moſt unwarrantable ſupineneſs in them, they betray the cauſe of truth and juſtice, make government a nullity, and deſecrate the law of God.

liar caſt objects to it; but their objection relates rather to the mode of doing than the thing done: for no Quaker can *affirm* without an appeal to God as witneſs, making himſelf anſwerable for his conduct in the inſtance at the bar of his Supreme Judge. The Moravians * have the like indulgence with the Quakers; but both are excluded from teſtimony in criminal caſes as well as ſerving on juries, and equally liable, if detected in falſifying where their affirmation is admitted, to a proſecution for perjury. This is mentioned upon the authority of Dr. Burn, in whoſe book of eccleſiaſtical law there is a longer detail of different ſorts of oaths, or rather different occaſions of taking them, than one would wiſh to find. Some of theſe are, it may be ſuppoſed, obſolete; and if others, eaſy to be particularized, which are required at preſent by common law, were ſo too, ſociety would be in a ſafer ſituation, and individuals leſs depraved. Multiplication in this way is very hazardous, and has a tendency to defeat the very purpoſes, with

* 22 Geo. II. c. 30.

a view

a view to which an oath is adminiſtered and taken. The ſhort of the matter is, that, both from the nature of man and the nature of things, there ariſes a *neceſſity* for OATHS in a judicial ſenſe, whenever the deareſt privileges, intereſts, properties, and enjoyments of mankind are at ſtake, inaſmuch as without this ſanction diſtreſs and confuſion of the very worſt kind muſt enſue.

" This practice is of ſo great conſequence, that human ſociety would ſcarce be kept in tolerable order by any other means. For, could we ſuppoſe a neglect of it to become general throughout a large nation, eſpecially one enjoying wealth and commerce, and liberty: could we ſuppoſe the different ſorts of perſons in it to be releaſed from what they looked on as their ſtrongeſt obligation to truth, it is eaſy to ſee, that univerſal confuſion muſt unavoidably follow; and there is not any age or nation of the world but have ſhewn that they were ſenſible of this. All governments have ever required the moſt highly eſteemed of their ſubjects, on every fit occaſion, to confirm their teſtimony by an appeal to God; for, if it is not demanded

of

of every one who is able to give it with a good conſcience, how can it be expected of any?"

We ſee then, without needleſs enlargement, or calling in authorities from writers, ancient or modern, there is, in the courſe of human affairs, a neceſſity for oaths and their application; becauſe, in many caſes, both ſatisfaction and ſecurity depend upon their uſe, ſo long as men ſwear, agreeably to Jeremiah's direction, "in truth, in righteouſneſs, and in judgment."

The great point is to provide for their SOLEMNITY, and to eſtabliſh their FORCE and INFLUENCE; which can only be done by inſtilling into the mind, in due ſeaſon, good principles, and arming the law with certain vengeance in caſe of PERJURY; that is, deliberate and wilful breach of oath; by repreſenting, at all fit opportunities, as perſons properly intereſted ought to do, the deſperate conſequences of thus moſt unnaturally and daringly trifling with the GREAT GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH: HIM, who cannot in any way, eſpecially this moſt inſulting one, be "mocked" with impunity, but will purſue,

ſue, in the order of his government, ſuch offenders, and make them examples of his judgement.

It may be right to introduce here a definition, or general deſcription, firſt, of an OATH, and then of PERJURY, as leading to ſubſequent conſiderations upon this ſubject. An OATH then ſolemnly taken, in a court of juſtice, or upon any legal and warrantable occaſion, is *this*, the ſwearing *by*, in the name *of*, or calling *upon*, God, the ſovereign of all things, as witneſs to the truth of whatever we affirm, deny, or profeſs to know, believe, and act, as we hope for his protection and bleſſing, or dread his vengeance, uſing this expreſſion when we deliver the ſacred book, upon whoſe contents we ſwear, "SO HELP ME GOD!" And the definition, or general deſcription of PERJURY, ſeems to be THIS, SWEARING, or taking an OATH, deceitfully and falſely, whilſt we know what we aſſert is not true, or what we undertake is not deſigned, but pretended to be ſo, in order to ſerve ſome unjuſtifiable purpoſe or end of iniquitous craft; to injure the innocent, or ſcreen the guilty; and ſo to defeat

the

the aim of juſtice, law, and government. PERJURY, in ſhort, is falſehood in the extreme, and with the utmoſt aggravation, as it "mocks" God, and diſtreſſes man, and tends to the ſubverſion of every ſocial good; of every moſt valuable poſſeſſion and enjoyment, even life itſelf. Theſe reſpective definitions of the DUTY and the CRIME do, I believe, accord with and comprehend what the writers upon this topic have ſeverally or jointly laid down as politically and morally right, and what cannot but continue to be ſo, with a view to both human and divine law*. It muſt, therefore, be of unſpeakable importance to ſociety, and of eternal moment to individuals, to be moſt circumſpectly guarded in this (for ſo it is in the fulleſt ſenſe) *religious* act; and, if *any abuſes* of it are diſcovered, to correct them, and to prevent their increaſe by every poſſible

* Bud. Epiſcop. Limborch, Puffendorf, Saunderſon, Blackſtone. Sir Edward Coke defines perjury to be a crime committed, when a lawful oath is adminiſtered, in ſome judicial proceeding, to a perſon who ſwears wilfully, abſolutely, and falſely in what is material to the iſſue in point or queſtion. 3 Inſt. 164.

expe-

expedient which can be applied. In ſaying which one cannot avoid adverting to SUBORNATION to perjury, that is, tempting others, the unwary, ignorant, and needy, into it, by bribes and attractive lures, to the joint hazard of the delinquents in reſpect of *time* as well as of eternity; for our laws are far from overlooking, however daringly it may be committed in defiance of them, this moſt atrocious ſin *. That ſuch abuſes ſhould ariſe

* Our preſent law, judge Blackſtone obſerves, has adopted the opinion of Cicero (derived from the law of the Twelve Tables) *perjurii pœna divina, exitium; humanæ, dedecus.* The divine puniſhment of perjury is deſtruction; human puniſhment, diſgrace.

Whatever mildneſs this diſcovers in the legiſlators, it proves at once their abomination of the crime, and what their thoughts were of a future reckoning, and its conſequences; that they looked up to the Judge of all the earth. It may be proper here briefly to ſtate how the law now ſtands reſpecting perjury. Judge B. ſays, "It is puniſhed, by a ſtatute of 5 Eliz. c. 9, with ſix months impriſonment, perpetual infamy, and a fine of 20l. or to have both ears nailed to the pillory. But the proſecution is uſually carried on for the offence at common law; eſpecially as, to the penalties before inflicted, the ſtatute 2 Geo. II. c. 25, ſuperadds a power for the court to order the offender to be ſent

ariſe at any time, and under any circumſtances, is a melancholy proof of ſad depravity in the human heart; but that they ſhould be known under that fullneſs of inſtruction, and perfect miniſtration of righteouſneſs, with which we are bleſſed, betrays an inſenſibility that muſt aſtoniſh and confound every ſerious and attentive obſerver. However, the evil, when ſeen and felt, as in our day it is, ought to be vigilantly adverted to, and ſtrenuouſly oppoſed. For a practice ſo notoriouſly wicked, and ſo deſtructive, as *that* of forſwearing oneſelf is, carries in its common tendency ſomething ſo obviouſly alarming, that human laws have never been quite inattentive to the miſchiefs thus produced; but in different countries, and at different times, have ſtudiouſly provided for the public diſgrace and puniſhment of ſuch as have been convicted of it: in

ſent to the houſe of correction for a term not exceeding ſeven years, or to be tranſported for the ſame period; and makes it felony, without benefit of clergy, to return or eſcape within the time.

By the law of France, upon a principle of retaliation, the puniſhment is capital.

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ome inſtances, even to the infliction of eath. Which, if juſtifiable in regard to any ther crime beſides that of murder, ſeems to e remarkably ſo in *this*, where not only CHARACTER and PROPERTY, but LIFE is expoſed to the unbridled malevolence of a profligate heart. *Retaliation*, which has been warranted by divine as well as human authority, may here be ſaid to be moſt equitably applicable, and could indeed be in ſcarce any ſuppoſable inſtance unduly ſevere.

FORGERY, by the law of our land, is ſubject, and with good reaſon, to the ſentence of DEATH. But, if it is, ſurely, upon compariſon, PERJURY cannot be entitled to milder treatment; but, (when viewed in its conſequences and effects, and conſidered with this dreadful and *peculiar* aggravation, the calling* upon the God of truth to be witneſs to a lie, and, *that*, whilſt the atteſtation is ſealed by profanely handling the "word of life," and putting our lips to the holy goſpel of Chriſt,) ſuch a preſumption

* It is no leſs than ſaying, "Thou ſhalt anſwer for me, O Lord my God." Pſ. xxxviii. v. 15.

muſt

muſt "cry aloud" for more ſignal puniſhment than that which is its preſent *moſt evidently* incompetent recompence. The check, as the law now ſtands, is by no means adequate; if it was, how little ſoever the influence of internal principle may be, a regard to perſonal ſafety would ſometimes operate to the prevention of ſocial abuſes and ſocial diſtreſs; ſuch as under circumſtances of extended and *complicated* commerce, when contrivances to ſupport the credit of ſome, and to delude the confidence of others, avail themſelves of every expedient, even at the expence of all moral and religious ties, to accompliſh the moſt profligate purpoſes and ends.

There is a particular kind of oath, or ſwearing, called an affidavit, diſtinguiſhed, if I miſtake not, in law books, as an oath in ſupport of written evidence, or ſome matter expreſſed in writing. This is taken, ſometimes, before law officers, ſuch as maſters in chancery, with a view to aſcertain truths of conſequence to individuals, or ſociety, and ſometimes, as in the caſe of burying in woollen, before magiſtrates or clergymen, whoſe province it is to take cognizance of proceed-

proceedings thus connected with the courſe of government and the ſecurity of its rights; or, again, to ſet forth the circumſtances of perſons intereſted in procuring beneficence, or juſtice, by a reaſonable claim to the one, or a well-grounded pretence to the other. In the taking and adminiſtering OATHS, under theſe deſcriptions, there ought to be a very reverential attention; and as they, whoſe great care it ſhould be to "MAINTAIN TRUTH," ſhould make this a ſerious buſineſs, ſo ought they, who engage in this way, to act under a fullneſs of ſerious concern and ſettled conviction; and as to the laſt mode of an affidavit, all magiſtrates ought to be careful not to trifle with a charge ſo ſolemnly veſted in them, leſt artifice and colluſion ſhould ſhelter themſelves under appearances of diſtreſs and poverty (perhaps wilfully and profligately brought on) in order to deceive the unwary, and procure undeſerved bounty in their relief. This is, undoubtedly, the proſtitution of an oath, and ſhould be vigilantly guarded againſt by official circumſpection.

How-

However, as to human laws, their ſuitability, competency, and execution, ALL THAT muſt be left in other hands. The principal deſign of this undertaking is, from a ſad conviction and an univerſal lamentation, in every quarter, of the ſhocking PROSTITUTION of OATHS in courts of judicature, and upon the more ordinary occaſions, (not always neceſſary) for their uſe and application, to impreſs the minds of all who are concerned in taking, or adminiſtering, or in any reſpect countenancing, and being parties to theſe, and to bring them to a ſerious recollection and a guarded habit, whenever a *ſanction* ſo very peculiar, ſo very ſacred, and ſo eternally portentous, is introduced. Theſe terms cannot be too ſtrong, when we remember that the "God of judgment, by whom actions are weighed," is Himſelf invoked and appealed to; and that our own ſalvation is, as it were, embarked in the *buſineſs*; *which* is of ſo diſtinguiſhedly ſerious a nature, that it would be well, if often, if perhaps always, upon going into it, this never to be forgotten queſtion of our Redeemer was ſilently put to himſelf by each

individual, "WHAT SHALL A MAN GIVE IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SOUL?" Experience teaches us, that, for want of ſuch attention, a moſt deplorable "ſhipwreck of faith and conſcience" is made in a variety of inſtances, and, God not being properly and prevailingly in the thoughts of men, they indulge a preſumption, which, in its fatal progreſs, bids defiance to Heaven; and threatens, nay has ſometimes brought, perdition to themſelves. Even common ſwearing, poſitively forbidden by our Saviour, probably for *this*, as well as other moſt obvious reaſons, is an encouragement to them who practiſe it to commit the more enormous and moſt extravagant crime of PERJURY; for God's name being thus habitually taken in vain leads inſenſibly to a callouſneſs of mind, which no ſerious expoſtulation will touch, nor the moſt powerful mean of conviction awaken to duty. "Common ſwearing (ſays an excellent writer) is a kind of *habitual perjury*. It makes the ſoul inattentive to what an *oath* is even while it utters it at the lips." What a Call is there then upon all perſons, who acknowledge A

GOD,

God, (and ſurely there is no ſuch fool to be found who will, bad as his heart may be, ſay with his tongue there is none) to diſcover the extremeſt reverence for his Name and Attributes; who, whether ſolemnly invoked, or ſilently adored, is eſſentially preſent to them, who "live and move in Him, and ſpieth out all their ways." But with what a peculiar force ſhould this Call affect them, who know what "pure Religion" is, and who ſee the Allmighty in the brighteſt diſplay of his glorious perfections? How ſhould it alarm and pervade all christian believers, and inſpire them with caution, circumſpection, and reſolution, to guard againſt, counteract, and ſuppreſs a wickedneſs ſo malignant in itſelf, ſo dangerous and deſtructive to ſociety, ſo ſubverſive of character, property, and life, and ſo notoriouſly diſgraceful to our moſt holy profeſſion? It ſhould ſeem as if, in ſuch a caſe, no man can wait for example, but that every one will be emulous to give it in his own practice, where the divine honour, and the moſt important intereſts of human nature, temporal and eternal, are depending. For not

only the wretched criminal, who, however tempted by bribe, by malice, by revenge, or by any partiality, or iniquitous prejudice, or enſnaring colluſion, at all hazards, takes an OATH to anſwer any particular end, is concerned in ſtemming the torrent of this ſhockingly predominant and moſt reproachfully *national* ſin; but every order and every rank of men, they eſpecially, who are the Teachers of Religion, and ALL, who preſide in any legal capacity, or are officially engaged in adminiſtering oaths to others; ſince it is eaſy to diſcern, that however the thing done may directly affect only a ſingle party, who is to anſwer for truth or falſehood, the manner of doing it comprehends others, whoſe conduct, addreſs, advice, and direction have, and muſt have, certain connection with this very ſolemn buſineſs, and will, as they are rightly diſcovered or not, have a very different influence and effect.

" *Greatly akin to the guilt of being *perjured* ourſelves, (a late eminent prelate

* Archbiſhop Secker, Serm. XIII. Vol. IV. read this and the preceding ſermon.

obſerves) nay, often as bad, and ſometimes worſe, if poſſible, is that of inducing others to be perjured: a ſin, which is committed, not only by direct hiring them to ſwear falſehoods, but, by awing and intimidating, by courting and flattering, by intimating advantages to them, if they can only ſwear ſo or ſo, by talking them into a perſuaſion of what they were not fully perſuaded of before, and thus making them ſtrain hard to believe that they know or remember more or leſs than they do." Theſe and other like artifices, wherever they take effect, ſeem to transfer, in a great meaſure at leaſt, the guilt from the confounded to the confounding; but they can exculpate no man for raſhly preſuming upon the ſwearing an oath without duly conſidering to whom he appeals, and what account he muſt hereafter give for his conduct, in the particular inſtance, at the Bar of God. A man, in any way wilfully forſworn, is an object, to uſe the words of the forecited author, 'of univerſal abhorrence.' He deſerves to be ſo in all caſes; he is ſo in moſt; and if, in any, a perſon, who is known to be ſuch, can be

looked on with the ſame eye as his neighbours, juſt in the degree which this [connivance] prevails, human ſociety tends to a diſſolution. Every member of it, therefore, is concerned to expreſs his deteſtation of ſo impious and deſtructive a crime. LAWMAKERS ought to enact the moſt EFFECTUAL proviſion againſt it. MAGISTRATES ought to put them in execution with PECULIAR VIGOUR: and every method ſhould be taken to render the very imagination of ſuch WICKEDNESS alarming to men. One method would be, to adminiſter oaths with greater ſolemnity than is now uſual; which is, indeed, ſhamefully neglected. Another, to appoint as few of them as poſſible. Oaths given and taken *frequently* will be given and taken irreverently, till at laſt many will regard them very little more than they do common ſwearing. How much this is now the caſe with ourſelves the moſt alarming proofs of extreme profanation continually evince; and they do plainly diſcover, that, in the view of national virtue, we are nearly undone. But let us, before our "feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains," and

deſolation overwhelms us, try every expedient which may rouze us from our lethargic ſtate, and bring us back to a juſt ſenſe of our duty to God and man. The SACREDNESS OF AN OATH is not only the uniform dictate of Reaſon, and a moſt diſtinguiſhed leſſon of Scripture, but is illuſtrated and enforced even by Heathen Practice and Mahometan Veneration. Theſe are, indeed, lower motives, but they ſpeak to our feelings with peculiar force, and ſhould conſpire to fill us, upon better principles than theirs, with all the uniform impreſſion of religious awe. Such was the influence of an OATH among the *Romans*, (in their uncorrupted ſtate) that nothing bound them ſtronger to the laws. They often did more for the obſervance of an OATH than they would even have done for the thirſt of glory, or for the love of their country *. In the Koran are theſe expreſſions: "perform your covenant with God when ye enter into covenant with him; and *violate not* your OATHS after the

* Monteſquieu's Spirit of Laws. This remark is ſupported by the beſt authorities.

rati-

ratification, ſince ye have made God a WITNESS over you. Verily God knoweth that which ye do; ye ſhall ſurely give an account of that which ye have done. Therefore take not your OATHS between you *deceitfully*, leſt your foot ſlip after it hath been ſtedfaſtly fixed, and ye taſte evil in this life, and ſuffer a grievous puniſhment in the life to come *." What muſt apoſtate Chriſtians think of themſelves when they recollect their having moſt preſumptuouſly trifled with the God of judgement, either by ſwearing deceitfully and falſely themſelves, or by encouraging and prevailing upon others to do ſo, by PERJURY or by SUBORNATION, who thus moſt inſolently provoke Him to "take vengeance of them," whilſt in the very act of acknowledgement they, by their inconſiſtency, diſavow Him? They muſt, and ſo muſt all ſuch abandoned ſinners, if the hardneſs of their hearts will admit a moment's ſerious thought, do, as Felix did when St. Paul

* Koran of Mohammed, Sale's tranſlation. Part of theſe words is thought by ſome to relate to their oath of fidelity to Mohammed; but, no doubt, the context is general.

reaſoned of "righteouſneſs, temperance, and judgement to come," TREMBLE. God grant that ſuch, whom it concerns, may make the inſtant of compunction a "convenient ſeaſon" for ſincere repentance, and that before this moſt alarmingly increaſing ſin of PERJURY becomes a mill ſtone about the neck of the nation to drown it in perdition, political wiſdom, if other wiſdom ſhould fail, may endeavour, by immediate and effectual remedies, to ſave it! If then, it appears, from the general opinion and practice of mankind, that OATHS judicially taken, or SWEARING upon certain intereſting calls and occaſions, is neceſſary to the order and ſupport of ſociety, as well as the ſatisfaction and peace of individuals; *ſo neceſſary*, that, without it, there can in many caſes be no ſecurity; if God, by Revelation, warrants, and gives ſanction to, this practice; if Jeſus Chriſt, in the Goſpel, allows and exemplifies ſuch a uſage; if His Apoſtles repreſent it as conſiſtent in its application with right principles, and beneficial in its tendency; if ſucceeding ages, except for extraordinary reaſons, have uniformly adopted

it, and if human laws, under the authority of the divine, require and enjoin our compliance, what have we to do but with a fullneſs of attention to conſider it as a RELIGIOUS ACT of the higheſt ſolemnity and importance, in reſpect to God and man, to One as the ſtedfaſt Friend of Truth and the declared Avenger of Falſehood, to the other as having a claim upon our integrity, which cannot in this particular act, by any ſubterfuge, be made void, the voice of nature, the command of God, the precept of Chriſt, concurring to enforce its faithful accompliſhment;—to examine, with the minuteſt exactneſs, our own hearts, that no plauſible pretext may be concealed there, which will lead us into partiality, deception, or double dealing. For, when we appeal to the EVER LIVING GOD, and call upon him to be a WITNESS of the purpoſe and intent of our ſoul, all muſt be open, direct, ſincere, and no Bias whatever, from ſelfiſhneſs, partiality, artifice, perſuaſion, or inſinuation, muſt be ſuffered to overrule, or even interrupt, our attention to the OATH OF GOD, all knowing and all ſeeing, under the ſanction of HIS

EVERLASTING GOSPEL. In every undertaking or engagement of this kind, whether with a view to the protection of innocence, the punishment of guilt, the execution of office and employment, or such as respect the choice of members to serve in parliament, which may be distinguished as an oath of privilege intended to prove qualification, residence, and identity, there should be the nicest and most vigilant concern to add to Faith, VIRTUE, that is, Fortitude, Resolution to resist most earnestly and constantly all opposition to Justice and Truth. Was this determination once fixed, as in every Christian breast it ought most devoutly, *all trifling* with oaths would be unknown, that "blackness of darkness" arising from such prostitution would be dispersed; temporal mischiefs and distresses would be prevented, and eternal safety, often risked and sacrificed as it is, preserved; and that detestable, that, morally and religiously considered, *monstrous*, politically experienced, *destructive* crime, PERJURY, the SWEARING FALSELY, OR VIOLATION OF OATH, would be heard of no more. To Heathens, who have marked it in the strongest

terms

terms of juſt SATIRICAL ſpirit, it was always ſingularly offenſive, and by ſome penally condemned. To Chriſtians, the Purity of whoſe religion is abhorrent of all deceit, duplicity, and falſehood, it ought to be moſt ſeverely reproachful, and ſtigmatized as a diſgrace to their Name, which nothing but the moſt finiſhed penitence can expunge. And, where *this* is not, it ſhould be remembered, that, in addition to the torments of conſcience, and a review of injuries brought by perfidiouſneſs upon individuals or ſociety, there is, and muſt be, a looking forward to vengeance even from the Throne of Mercy itſelf. For, though man may, in the very *worſt* ſenſe, be a liar, God muſt be true, whoſe deciſions are founded in unalterable equity, and will be awarded as infallible evidence ſhall direct. Before his Tribunal no ſtratagem, however concerted, will avail, nor can any evaſion ſcreen the offender. Abandoned wickedneſs, however concealed, will then be "clear as the light, and juſt dealing as the noon day." The ſentence will be ſhort, but deciſive; to the righteous, "Come ye bleſſed, enter into the kingdom prepared

prepared for you from the beginning of the world;" to the wicked, in which diviſion *perjured perſons* are particularly ranked, "Go ye curſed," made ſo by extreme depravity, "into everlaſting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Whatever has been here ſuggeſted upon this moſt important, and, AT PRESENT, peculiarly intereſting ſubject, when OATHS are ſo *frequently* adminiſtered, and ſo *freely* taken, and when a familiarity with the abuſe of them, to the great detriment of ſociety as well as, in different views, to the deſtruction of individuals, is ſo deplorably contracted, proceeds from an earneſt regard as well for the Polity of the State, the beſt ſupport of which TRUTH muſt always be, as for the Cauſe of Religion, of which it is the firſt and greateſt Ornament. Amongſt other means of counteracting that moſt dreadful effect of REIGNING LICENTIOUSNESS, one very promiſing is impreſſing with the niceſt attention upon the minds of youth an abhorrence of common profane ſwearing, and of a lie or falſehood in all its kinds and ſhapes. Both are the meaneſt and moſt

deſpicable

deſpicable vices, and both open a ready paſſage to falſe ſwearing, in the way of ſolemn oath, that is, PERJURY. What a gratification muſt ſuch a diſcharge of duty be to parental affection? This is ſterling fondneſs. What honour would it reflect on domeſtic government and preceptive care, when it evinced that maſters and teachers paid due attention to the firſt and moſt important part of their charge, the forming the heart and manners? We are continually talking of accompliſhments, but unhappily loſing ſight of the moſt ſubſtantial and valuable; for want of which others are nugatory and vain. and ſometimes lures to, or inſtruments of, miſchief and miſery. The concluſion is, (may it obtain univerſal attention!) that "whatſoever things are true, juſt, honeſt, lovely, or of good report," it is our duty, our intereſt, our comfort, our reward, in reſpect to *time* as well as *eternity*, not only to "think of," but to inculcate, to vindicate, to enforce, and, above all, to practice THESE THINGS. But if THESE THINGS are neglected and counteracted; more eſpecially, if the grand Tie of all, AN OATH, founded in

and

and enforcing our natural and moral relations and obligations, THAT, which is for "Confirmation" be diſſolved, where, as Lord Bacon remarks, are we to look for Stability or Expedient? Complicated Confuſion will follow, and the Proſpect, in every ſenſe, political, ſocial, and religious, muſt be dreadful.

3.

A

SERMON

UPON

SWEARING.

BY

WILLIAM FLEETWOOD, D.D.
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Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain.

IT were good that you ſhould often read the 19th Chapter of *Exodus*, to ſee with what a dreadful Solemnity the *Ten Commandments* were delivered by God to *Moſes* from Mount *Sinai*: *ver.* 6. *It came to paſs on the third Day, in the Morning, that there were Thunders and Lightnings, and a thick Cloud upon the Mount, and the Voice of the Trumpet exceeding loud; ſo that all the People that was in the Camp trembled. And* Moſes *brought forth the People out of the Camp to meet with God, and they ſtood at the nether part of the Mount. And Mount* Sinai *was altogether on a Smoak, becauſe the Lord deſcended upon it in Fire; and the Smoak thereof aſcended as the Smoak of a Furnace; and the whole Mount quaked greatly.* This was a Sight ſo terrible, that *Moſes* himſelf ſaid (*Heb.* xii. 21.) *I exceedingly fear and quake:* And for the People, They, when they ſaw the Fire, the Blackneſs, Darkneſs, and the Tempeſt, and heard the Thunder, Trumpet, and the Voice of GOD—*removed and ſtood afar off, and ſaid to* Moſes, *Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God ſpeak with us leſt we die.* The Words which GOD ſpake, with this amazing, dreadful Preparation, were the *Ten Commandments.* Do you therefore think theſe Words were Words to be neglected or forgotten? I have repeated a few of theſe Paſſages, that what I am going to ſay may make the deeper Impreſſion on your Minds.

THE Words of the Text, are Part of that Divine Law, that God himſelf uttered, with all

thoſe awful Circumſtances, before rehearſed: They make up, you know, the *Third Commandment*. Imagine therefore, that you heard the Voice of God, proclaiming loud in all your Ears, from the midſt of glorious and yet dreadful Fire and Smoak, Lightning, Thunder, and the Sound of Trumpets—*Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain.*—Imagine this, and ſee, if it is like to be ſo cheap a Thing, in the Concluſion, to profane the ſacred Name of God, by Oaths and Curſes, Blaſphemies and dreadful Execrations; as is the common Practice now-a-days to do, on every ſlight and frivolous Occaſion.

To preſerve thoſe who are innocent, and to reclaim thoſe who are guilty, of this wicked Practice, I intend, in the firſt Place, to conſider the Words of the Text; and next to make uſe of ſuch Reaſons and Arguments, as I think proper to diſſuade from it.

To take the Name of God in vain, is in the firſt and literal Senſe, to uſe the ſacred Name of God lightly and commonly to vain and idle Purpoſes, when it is needleſs and inſignificant; although we do not ſwear by it, or call him to witneſs to the Truth of what we ſay. To have that Name often in our Mouths, upon every little poor Occaſion, is to make it cheap and deſpicable, and ſhews we have not that awful Reſpect for Him in our Hearts that we ſhould have: This is the Beginning of Evil, and generally prepares the Way to Swearing: People do not fall to downright Oaths at firſt, but begin to wear off the Fear and Dread of Swearing, by the little Abuſes and Profanations

of the Name of GOD; and then they venture by Degrees to ſwear by it. Theſe Miſchiefs come by Cuſtom and Habit; and therefore you muſt take good Heed at firſt, and ſtop your Children and young People, from uſing the Name of GOD familiarly and commonly, and upon all Occaſions: and that will beget a Reverence to it, and keep them from farther abuſing it. Remember to check and puniſh them, if you hear them call on GOD, either at their Play or Work, or on any Occaſion, but what is ſerious and becoming; and by doing this conſtantly, you will ſtop up one of the commoneſt Inlets to this wicked Practice; you will make them careful of what they ſay; and do yourſelves a great deal of Good by it. Your doing your Duty to your Children and Servants in this Point, will put you in Mind of your own Neglects and Failings; you will, in Time, be aſhamed of reminding them of taking the Name of GOD in vain, when you yourſelves are guilty of it, and have ſet them a bad Example. I wiſh that the frequent Practice of abuſing the Name of GOD, in Parents, and Maſters and Miſtreſſes, be not often the Occaſion of Children and Servants falling into the like; and often the Reaſon why thoſe Parents, Maſters and Miſtreſſes, will not, or dare not, reprove and puniſh their Children and Servants for ſo offending. And pray conſider, what an evil Paſs thoſe poor People are brought to, that dare not do their Duty to their Children and Servants, when yet they ſhall be puniſhed ſorely by GOD for not doing it. I wiſh they would think better on this Matter; and though they are exceeding faulty in this Point themſelves, yet they would

ſtill reprove, and puniſh thoſe who are under their Care for the like Offences; they would do but their Duty, prevent a great deal of Miſchief, and ſave the being guilty of other Peoples Sins.

But *to take the Name of God in vain*, is, moſt properly, to Swear, either *Raſhly*, without juſt and weighty Occaſion, without Heed and Reverence; or *Falſely*, without Regard to Truth, and to what our Conſcience tells us; either without knowing what we ſay to be true, or knowing that what we ſay is not true.

Firſt, Of ſwearing lightly or raſhly; the Commandment is, *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain:* By which it ſhould appear, that no Man can be ſaid to *Swear*, that does not uſe the very Name of *God* in his Oath; this was an old Miſtake, and yet continues very common amongſt us, and therefore muſt needs be removed, before I can go any further; for People have ſtill fancied, that if they do not mention the ſacred Name of God in their Aſſeverations, they are not to come under the Guilt of taking God's Name in vain, although they ſwear by any Thing, or Creature elſe. Our Saviour ſays, *Matt.* xxiii. 16. to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*—*Woe to you, ye blind Guides, which ſay*—*Whoſoever ſhall ſwear by the Temple, it is nothing*; *but whoſoever ſhall ſwear by the Gold of the Temple, he is a Debtor*, that is, he is obliged to perform his Oath—*Ye Fools and blind*; *for whether is greater, the Gold, or the Temple that ſanctifieth the Gold? and whoſoever ſhall ſwear by the Altar, it is nothing, but whoſoever ſweareth by the Gift that is upon the Altar, he is guilty*—that is, if he perform not that Oath:

Ye

Ye Fools and blind; for whether is greater, the Gift, or the Altar that ſanctifieth the Gift? Whoſo therefore (ſaith our Saviour, and which is the Solution of what I propoſe) *ſhall ſwear by the Altar, ſweareth by it, and by all Things thereon. And whoſo ſhall ſwear by the Temple, ſweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that ſwears by Heaven, ſweareth by the Throne of God, and by him that ſitteth thereon*—Add to this what he ſaith in *Matt.* v. 34. *But I ſay unto you, ſwear not at all*; that is, in your common Converſation—*neither by Heaven, for it is God's Throne—neither by Earth; for it is his Footſtool—neither by Jeruſalem, for it is the City of the great King—neither ſhalt thou ſwear by thy Head, for thou canſt not make one Hair white or black.* Add, I ſay, this to what is before ſaid, and you will find, that the Relation every Thing and Creature in the World has to the great Creator of them all, is ſo cloſe and dependent, that it is aſſigned as the Cauſe, why he who ſweareth by the one, ſhould be concluded to ſwear by the other. He who ſwears by the Altar, Offering, or the Temple, ſwears by Him to whom that Altar is erected, to whom that Offering is offered, and to whom that Temple, with its Service, is devoted—that is, to God. He who ſwears by Heaven, ſwears by Him who governs therein; he who ſweareth by the Earth, ſwears by Him whoſe Footſtool it is, and who made and preſerves it. He who ſwears by *Jeruſalem*, ſwears by Him whoſe City it was, that is, by the great God. He who ſwears by his Head which is as it were the Fountain of Life, ſwears by Him who made that Head, and in whoſe Hands alone is the Power

of Life and Death. This is a Demonſtration (in its kind) that People may ſwear without uſing the Name of GOD; and conſequently may offend againſt this Commandment, without taking the Name of the LORD their GOD in vain, in the literal Senſe. And therefore, pray remember, that you ſatisfy not yourſelves with any ſuch idle Diſtinction; nor think you do not Swear, when you do not pronounce the ſacred Name of GOD, though you ſwear by any Thing elſe.

I DO not ſay, however, that it is not better, to ſwear by any Thing that does not immediately relate to GOD, than by his ſacred *Name*, his precious *Blood*, and meritorious *Wounds*, and Paſſion; becauſe it creates leſs Horror, gives leſs Offence, and is not of ſo bad Example: There is great Difference in Oaths; all are bad, but ſome are much worſe than others, and look as if they were more ſtudied, and deliberately wicked, and as if they came from Hell.

WHEN I have convinced you of this, that the Guilt of taking GOD's Name in vain, may be contracted by ſwearing by any Thing elſe that has relation to God, though his Name be not directly uſed, then you will ſee, that you muſt no more ſwear by any Thing elſe, than by the Name of GOD; and therefore that all Sorts of Oaths are comprehended under the Third Commandment, and concluded under theſe Words—*Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.* Which Words contain, as I ſaid, a Prohibition of all light and raſh Oaths in our common Converſation, as well as all falſe Oaths, whether in private Company, or in public Courts of Judicature, and

before the Magiſtrate. I will only now ſpeak of all light and raſh Oaths, whether true or falſe, whether miſchievous or idle. For the Name of God is deſpiſed and profaned, by our uſing it upon light and frivolous Occaſions; though what we ſwear be never ſo true; becauſe the Thing was not worthy of ſo much Weight, as an Oath does uſually add to what is ſaid. Now that no one is to ſwear in light and trivial Matters, will appear to you very plainly, when you conſider what an Oath is.

An Oath is a moſt religious Thing; it is an Acknowledgment of God's Omniſcience, and Omnipotence; we declare thereby, that we believe He knows the very Secrets of our Hearts, and that He can and will puniſh us if what we affirm be not true, and if we purpoſe not to perform what we then promiſe. An Oath, is the ſolemn calling upon God to bear witneſs, that what we utter with our Mouths is what we believe in our Hearts to be exactly true; and it is alſo the ſolemn calling upon God to puniſh, and take Vengeance on us, if we do not ſeriouſly intend what we ſay and promiſe. The Heart of Man lies ſecret to all the World; you want to know whether I ſpeak the Truth, and whether I intend to do as I ſay I will do. My bare Word is not ſufficient in the Caſe, becauſe all Men are, or may be, Liars; and though their Words may be with you, yet their Hearts may be far from you. How will you do then, to know whether I be a true Man, and ſpeak what I think? why then I take an Oath, I ſwear by the ſacred Name of God, that what I affirm with my Lips, is what my Heart

believes to be true; by this I call GOD to witneſs that my Heart and Mouth agree, and that if they do not agree, then I am underſtood to deſire that GOD would take Vengeance on me, and puniſh my Impiety to *Him*, and Falſhood to *Man*. Can any Thing then be more ſerious and religious than a ſolemn Oath? Aſſure yourſelves that every Time you take an Oath, let it be by what it will, that has relation to GOD, you do at that Time call down the great GOD to witneſs to the Truth of what you ſay, and to avenge Himſelf on your Falſhood, if what you ſay be indeed falſe.

REMEMBER therefore, I deſire you, what a ſerious Thing an Oath is; and then think, whether it be fit to apply ſo ſerious a Thing to ſuch light and frivolous Occaſions as Men commonly ſwear upon, though what they ſwear to ſhould be true. Let this be the firſt Reaſon againſt ſwearing lightly and fooliſhly, in trivial Things. It is an awful Thing to call upon the great GOD of Heaven and Earth, the Maker and Preſerver of us all, upon whoſe Will alone we depend for every Moment of our Lives; to call Him to atteſt and witneſs to Matters of ſo ſmall and pitiful Concern, that you would be aſhamed to call even me, or any ſerious Neighbour, to be witneſs to. This ought not to be done, in Decency, though what you ſwear to, be never ſo true. An Oath is to make an End of Strife, and for Confirmation of Truth; but then this Truth is to be a Truth of Weight and great Importance; and this Strife is to be Matters worth the Striving for. Every Oath that is allowed to be taken by GOD, is to be taken, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſays, chap. iv. 2. *in Truth, in Judgment,*

and in Righteouſneſs. With the Heart, with the Underſtanding, and a good Conſcience; and to diſcover the Truth, that Judgment may be righteouſly adminiſtered, and Good may be done by it. The Name of GOD, is not to be ſworn by, where none of theſe good Ends are anſwered. I wiſh you could but remember all the Oaths you have heretofore ſworn, that you might examine and ſee, how few were ſworn in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteouſneſs; how few tended to diſcover any Truth of Importance, that wanted to be diſcovered; how few of them contributed to the doing Juſtice to any one, or to the promoting Righteouſneſs. I am afraid you will find, that every Oath, beſides what you took before the Magiſtrate, was taken vainly, lightly, raſhly, preſumptuouſly, and wickedly; ſo far from doing any Good, that they are, every one of them, Matter of Shame, Humiliation, and Repentance before GOD.

REMEMBER, Secondly, that all theſe light, raſh, and preſumptuous Oaths, are not only unbecoming and unfit to be uttered, by Reaſon of their unworthy Matter, but are moſt ſolemnly forbidden by GOD. It is GOD himſelf, you ſee, that ſays to every one of us—*Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.*—Would GOD himſelf deſcend from Heaven, with ſuch Solemnity, as you have ſeen, to forbid you the taking his Name in vain, if it were not a Matter of the greateſt Moment and Importance in the World to you, not to take that Name in vain? It is for your Sake alone, for your Advantage, here and hereafter, that GOD inſtructs you in his Will, and

tells you what you are to do, and what to leave undone; in order to his bleſſing, favouring you, and making you happy.

If you ſhould ſpend every Day you live, in Oaths and Curſes, Execrations, Blaſphemies, and Profanations of God's holy Name and Word, you would not interrupt his Happineſs, or do Him any Harm at all: But becauſe it will hurt yourſelves, and bring you to everlaſting Deſtruction, both of Body and Soul, not to do his Will, and to comply with his Injunctions and Commands; therefore,

Remember, thirdly, That theſe Oaths will be avenged by God, ſome Time or other.—*The Lord will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain.* He who from Heaven forbids us, every one, to take his Name in vain, declares from Fire and Smoke, with Thunder, Lightning, Storm and Tempeſt, that *he will not hold us guiltleſs, that take his Name in vain:* and if not guiltleſs, then to be ſure we ſhall be held guilty; guilty of the Violation and Breach of God's Law: and conſequently liable to ſuch Puniſhment, as is due to ſuch Offenders, and Offences. What particular Puniſhments they are obnoxious to, in this Life, is not declared; and therefore they are liable to all: There is not a Judgment in all the Stores of God's Vengeance but they have Reaſon to apprehend and fear; their Sin is ſo provoking, and preſumptuous, and has ſo little Temptation to it. *Becauſe of Swearing the Land mourneth*, ſaid the Prophet *Jeremiah*, ch. xxiii. 10. that is, the Land was afflicted with ſeveral Plagues and heavy Judgments, by Reaſon of the Frequency of Oaths and Perjuries among

among the People. And I dare ſay, that many a Man amongſt us, is afflicted, blaſted, and undone, by this audacious Contempt of GOD's Name and Profanation, who little thinks from whence the Curſe, and ſecret Canker comes? How ſhould it be otherwiſe? Can GOD be preſumed to bleſs, can He be intreated to bleſs thoſe People, who daily take his Name in vain, who defy his Laws, and Curſe Him to His Face? who call for Vengeance on their own and other Peoples Heads, almoſt every Word they ſay? Can they expect a Bleſſing, who hardly ever mention GOD, but in the Way of Blaſphemy? and make few other Prayers, than for Plagues, and Miſchiefs, and Damnations, and eternal Wrath? How merciful is GOD, that He does not grant, what theſe poor People aſk Him with ſuch Earneſtneſs!

BUT, be aſſured, that without ſincere Repentance, and Amendment of this Sin, however He forbear you in this World, He will moſt certainly, according to your Curſes and repeated Wiſhes, condemn you, and confound you in the World to come. Thoſe Prayers that came from Hell, which pleaſed your Ears, and filled your Mouth ſo often, ſhall once be heard, and carry you to that accurſed Place of Pain and Sorrow, and to that Company of curſed Spirits which you have called upon ſo often. Remember, that it is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living GOD; who has declared *He will not hold Him guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain.*

REMEMBER, Fourthly, that as often as you come to Church on theſe Occaſions, ſo often you ſolemnly pray to GOD, that you may eſcape this great

great Guilt: No ſooner has the Miniſter proclaimed in the Name of GOD, *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*; but the People, every one of them, is commanded to anſwer—*Lord, have Mercy upon us, and incline our Hearts to keep this Law.* And can you go from hence, and unbeſpeak this Prayer immediately, by falling again into that wicked Practice? Without the Grace of GOD, we can do nothing that is Good, nor eſcape the falling into any Evil: We therefore hear this Law of GOD pronounced, againſt taking his Name in vain, we hear the Tranſgreſſion of this Law ſeverely threatened—*He will not hold us guiltleſs*—we pray Him to have Mercy on us, to forgive us all our great and frequent Violations of this Law, that are paſt; and we intreat Him of his Mercy alſo to incline our Hearts for the future to keep this Law; that He would fill them with ſuch an awful Reverence and Regard to His great Name, that we may never do it any Violence or Diſhonour, by ſwearing idly, raſhly, or falſely; and there is all the Reaſon in the World, to pray this Prayer moſt ſeriouſly and earneſtly, becauſe it is decent, reaſonable, and a Thing of ſuch Moment, as even our Lives and Souls depend upon it. Now put theſe Things together, that have already been laid down—That an Oath is a moſt ſacred, ſerious, ſolemn Act of Religion, intended by GOD for the Confirmation of Truth, the doing Juſtice and Judgment to all Men, and the putting an End to Strife—That it is a moſt unſeemly, unbecoming Thing, to apply ſuch ſerious and religious Affirmations, as Oaths are, to light and trivial Words, and Matters of no

Weight

Weight and Moment—That all ſuch Oaths are utterly forbidden by GOD's expreſs Command, uttered by his own Mouth; that the Breach of this Command will ſurely be avenged by Him, as ſure as GOD is true, who has ſaid it—And that we make it our conſtant Prayer, that we may not fall into this Sin, but may incline with all our Hearts to keep this Law.—Put all theſe Things together, and ſee if light and common Swearing be a Thing that Men ſhould ſo cheaply and eaſily fall into; if it be not what we ought immediately to be humbled for, to be ſadly aſhamed of, to be moſt ſeriouſly repented of, and left. Theſe are all Religious Conſiderations, and concern us, as People that pretend to believe in GOD, that acknowledge the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, and profeſs and call ourſelves Chriſtians.

THERE is no ſuch Thing as anſwering any of theſe Arguments: nobody once pretends to juſtify their Practice of Swearing, either from Scripture, Reaſon, or Authority of wiſe and good Men: The Practice indeed runs againſt all, and is too much for all of them, in this World; but no body ever yet defended it: Is it not ſtrange, that what is ſo impoſſible to be excuſed or juſtified, ſhould yet obtain ſo generally? that that which every one condemns, both in himſelf, and in all other People, ſhould yet be patiently ſuffered to prevail, and reign, as it were, without control?

IF theſe religious Conſiderations will not prevail, that yet convince the Conſcience of every ſingle Man and Woman in the World——there is but little Hope that other Reaſons of leſs Weight and Moment ſhould do any great Service

vice, to the diſcountenancing and abating of this wicked Practice. But yet it will become us to try all Ways and Means to do it.

ADD therefore, in the fifth Place, that the Laws of the Land take Cognizance of this Matter, and make it Penal *to take the Name of God in vain.* It is a Sort of Reproach to any Chriſtian People, to think, that when neither the Fear of offending GOD, and incurring his Diſpleaſure, and being puniſhed by Him, can reſtrain Men from Swearing, the Penalty of *Two Shillings* ſhould do it: that Men ſhould rather fear the paying a little Money, than fear the offending Him, who can caſt both Soul and Body into Hell-Fire. This, I ſay, is a Sort of ſhameful Conſideration; but we muſt take Things as we find them, and be very glad if the Fear of any Thing will keep Men in due Bounds, and preſerve them in any Degree innocent. Remember therefore, that whoever ſwears in common Converſation, is liable to the Forfeiture, if complained of; and that you lie at the Mercy of every one that will inform againſt you. I wiſh this Law would take better Effect, than it has hitherto done; and that you would keep one another in Awe, by the Power it gives you, to put them to Expence and Shame, that are guilty of Swearing. The Name of an Informer, is in ſome Caſes odious, but in this Caſe it is not ſo; here a Man gets nothing by it, becauſe the Forfeiture goes to the Poor, which is ſo much Good to them who want it: and it is done for a good End, that GOD may not be diſhonoured, and that a ſinful Practice in our Neighbour may not be ſuffered to go on, to his great

Miſchief.

Miſchief. I ſhould not be aſhamed myſelf, to turn Informer in this Caſe, if it ſhould ſo fall out. But I had rather much, that the Fear of God, and the Senſe of your Duty, ſhould reſtrain you from doing Evil, than the Fear of ſuch Information, and ſuch Penalty. Make this Uſe of the Law, however; conſider, whether it be worth the while, to pay down the Wages of a Day or two's Labour, by which your Family ſhould ſubſiſt, for the Sake of Swearing an Oath,—if there were really no other Miſchief to follow. Eſpecially when you remember, in the ſixth Place, that there is neither Pleaſure nor Profit to be reaped from this ungodly Practice. They who are moſt addicted to Swearing, know not why they are ſo; they can give no Reaſon, why they fall continually into this abominable Sin; they freely acknowledge that they neither propoſe, nor find any Pleaſure or Advantage in it. Other Sins, have one or both of theſe Temptations, to induce men to fall; they either ſatisfy ſome ſenſual Appetite, or gratify ſome covetous Deſire of Profit; at leaſt they hope to find their Account in it. But he who Swears thinks of neither: ſo that he truly gives away his Soul for nothing. Other Sinners ſell at leaſt, but this Man ſquanders it away for that which neither pleaſes him nor does him any Service. Of all Offenders in the World, the common Swearer makes the worſt Bargain, gives himſelf up to everlaſting Pain and Sorrow, for that which no Body adviſed him to, no Body tempted him to, no Body approved when done; which he himſelf never liked whilſt doing, nor ever remembered when done, with any Satisfaction

tisfaction or Content. Let any one call to Mind the many Oaths, and Profanations of God's holy Name he has been guilty of, and ſee what he has gotten by them, whether he be the Richer, the Wiſer, or more eſteemed, or any Ways bettered by them. And will you keep a Practice ſtill, that never did, nor ever will, bring either Pleaſure or Advantage with it? *What ſhall it profit a Man,* indeed, *to gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul?* But is it not ſtill ſo much the worſe, to loſe his Soul, and gain nothing? The ſenſual Pleaſures of this Life, may bring one to eternal Pain; but yet it is fooliſher to endure thoſe Pains, for Sins that have no Pleaſure in them. In all Offences elſe, we conſider what Men aim at, and intend, what their End and Drift is, and what the Motives and Temptations to them are; and accordingly we excuſe them more or leſs: But in this, we ſee no End, no Temptation, and they themſelves ſay ſo; they are therefore Self-condemned, and condemned by every Body elſe. What ſhall I ſay farther? It is a Practice that you hate and abhor in all People whom you love, as in your Wives and Children; and a Practice you cannot well endure in your Servants, and ſuch as are related to you. You would, I imagine, ſtand amazed, be angry and aſhamed, to hear your Wives and Children anſwer you with Oaths, ſwear loudly upon all Occaſions, and mingle Blaſphemies and Curſes in their common Diſcourſes. They have the ſame Paſſions, the ſame Provocations to this Sin with yourſelves; you are no more allowed by the Laws of God or Man, than they; it is only Cuſtom makes the Difference.

ence. Their Modeſty and Virtue has not yet broken through the Reſtraints of Religion and GOD's Laws, and I hope they never will; but if they ſhould, they have as much to ſay before GOD as yourſelves; no Sex, Age, or Degree, can pretend to a Privilege of offending GOD. But I would gladly hope, it is Love to thoſe Relations, that would give you both Grief and Shame, to hear them fall into this wicked Practice; imagine therefore, ſince they love you alſo equally, that thoſe Relations are alike aſhamed and grieved, to ſee you fall ſo eaſily and frequently into that wicked Practice; and for their Sake, as well as for your own, forbear it. Think with yourſelf, that as you fell into this Sin by Example, and hearing others Swear, by Habit, and by Cuſtom, ſo may your Wife and Children (without the Grace of GOD, and great Care) be brought by your Example, and living daily in your Company, to the ſame ſhameful wicked Cuſtom: And then, what a Heap of Sin, and Miſchief, do you draw upon your Head; by occaſioning thoſe to fall, whom, above all the World, you were obliged to keep upright? by drawing down GOD's Vengeance on their Heads, whoſe Innocence and Prayers might have prevailed with Him to ſpare you, and reſtore you to his Favour. It is certain, indeed, that neither Wife, nor Children, will be excuſed before GOD, for following the wicked Example of a Huſband and a Father; becauſe every Body is to live by Rule, and GOD's Law, and not by any one's Example: but it is as certain, that he ſhall be puniſhed by GOD, for giving ſuch an ill Example to his Wife and Children,

who

who are ſo apt and eaſy to follow it. I would not eaſily ſuppoſe, that Women frequently fall into this accurſed Cuſtom; but I ſay, if they do, the Men are very much to blame for it, by ſetting them ſo ill an Example, and giving them ſuch Countenance and Encouragement. And then, what a Sort of Hell is there in ſuch a Houſe, where every one deſpiſes GOD, and tramples under Foot His Laws, and no Body is left to ſtand amazed, to reprove, to grieve, and to intercede with GOD for his Mercy and Forbearance to that ſinful and loſt Family? Theſe are the propereſt Arguments that I could think on, to diſſuade you by, from light and raſh Swearing; they are ſuch as you have often heard, ſuch as your own Senſe and Reaſon may, and does ſuggeſt and furniſh you with, againſt your daily Practice: Your Condemnation will chiefly ariſe from hence, that you, in your own Hearts and Conſciences, know all the Reaſons and Arguments againſt Swearing, and not one for it, as well as the greateſt Scholars in the World: and therefore want not to be inſtructed in your Duty by us, but to be remembered and put in Mind of what you knew before.

LET me therefore make an End, at this Time, with reminding you of ſome few Things, and laying ſome few Injunctions on you. Let every one, that has been guilty of this dangerous and wicked Practice, repent ſincerely of it, aſk GOD Forgiveneſs with his whole Heart, and beg the Aſſiſtance of his Grace, to keep him, and prevent his falling again into it. And let him alſo uſe his beſt Endeavours himſelf to avoid all Manner of Occaſions, that hitherto have led him into it.

Let

Let him carefully watch over himſelf, that he ſpeak not haſtily and unadviſedly with his Lips. Remember GOD is in the Company, and hears every Word you ſay. Give not Way to Anger upon every little Accident that croſſes your Deſigns; this is the Parent of many Oaths; the leaſt Thing that is out of the Way, and does not do as you would have it, the leaſt Oppoſition of your Judgment, the leaſt Contradiction to your Will, provokes you to call on GOD, to curſe, and to blaſpheme his Name; as if that would any Way mend the Matter, or make Things go on the better. You muſt, if given to Swearing, above all Things, avoid Drinking and Gaming; if the Fear of GOD depart from you, when you are Sober, Serious, and have your Senſes about you, and you can hardly then forbear Swearing; how ſhould you do it, when you have loſt that Reaſon, and are little leſs than Mad? Even they who abhor an Oath when ſober, do yet outrageouſly Swear when they are overcome with Drink; you muſt therefore by all Means avoid Exceſs, that does ſo naturally and eaſily provoke to Paſſion. And as to Gaming, there are few People in the World that follow it, but ſwear exceſſively; there are few that loſe their Money, but loſe their Patience and their Temper with it; and the little croſs Accidents that commonly happen, overthrow all Reaſon, and leave the Man to the Rage of his wild Paſſions, and then you know what follows. Gaming is one of the moſt deſtructive Vices Men can fall into, and provokes to the greateſt Anger. It undoes moſt People at long run; and it is much worſe in mean and poor People than in the

the Rich, becauſe it waſtes their Time exceſſively, which poor People can very ill ſpare, from the Care and Labours that are to ſupport themſelves and poor Families; and it waſtes their ſmall Subſtance, that ſhould furniſh their Wives and Children with Bread, and other Neceſſaries of Life. But that which I intend againſt it now is, that it occaſions Oaths and Curſes, Blaſphemies and dreadful Execrations, in a moſt fearful Manner; and therefore, whoever would avoid Swearing, and taking the Name of GOD in vain, muſt be ſure to avoid Gaming, though it be for little Matters. Avoid alſo all ſuch Company, as are likelieſt to miniſter Occaſion to Anger or Oppoſition. Some People are of ſo perverſe and thwarting a Temper, that a Man had need of Patience to converſe quietly with them; they that are apt to be provoked, muſt ſhun this Company. And when you have taken this Care of yourſelf, to prevent your falling into this wicked Practice—go on to promote the Glory of GOD, by doing Good to others. If your Neighbours are apt to ſwear, tell them, calmly, they diſtruſt you too much, and that you would believe them without an Oath, they have ſuch Credit with you. When once they find you deal thus Chriſtianly and Friendly with them, they will be more upon their guard in your Company; and ſo you will be inſtrumental to their Good; and make ſome Amends for your own Miſcarriages. But for thoſe who are more immediately under your Care, and depend upon you, there you may be more free, and there it is your Duty to reprove and puniſh ſuch as you find guilty this Way of diſ-

honouring

honouring GOD. Let not any of your Children dare to Swear, without your Anger and immediate Chaſtiſement. You will ſave them hereby from much Miſchief here, and from GOD's Anger hereafter. Keep not a Servant under your Roof that is guilty of this wicked Practice, their Labours will not be bleſſed by GOD to you. Employ no Workmen that will not do their Buſineſs without Swearing. Relieve no Poor that are guilty of thus diſhonouring GOD. You would, in a little Time, ſee a great Change and Reformation of Manners, if you would take theſe Courſes: They ought to want even Neceſſaries, that will not work for them, and enjoy them with the Favour of GOD. They would in a little Time be very thankful to you, and bleſs GOD for you, that by theſe Means reclaimed them from thoſe curſed Habits. This was heretofore the Sin of the Rich, the Eaſy, and the Thoughtleſs great Men of the World; but now, the poorer People are the Wickeder, and moſt provoking of GOD; they will not let the Rich and Great have any Sins peculiar to them, but will come in for their Share, though it be but a Share of Damnation.

Is it not a ſtrange and amazing Thing, to hear poor People ſwearing at the Plow, and at their daily Labour? Swearing at their Horſes, Cattle, and any Thing that comes in their Way? People that depend on the Bleſſing of GOD for their daily Bread, are daily provoking Him to blaſt and confound them! Ought not theſe People to be taught by Puniſhment, and all Sorts of Penalties and Rigours, to be more ſenſible of their Duty;

and

and to pay more Honour to their conſtant heavenly Benefactor? Shall it be cheaper ſtill to defy their Maker and deſpiſe their good Redeemer, than to ſpeak a diſreſpectful Word of their Superiors, Parents, or their Maſters? Compaſſion to the Poor would make one partial in their Favour, and much more tender of afflicting them, than others; but this is true Compaſſion to afflict them for awhile, that they may learn not to blaſpheme, and be ſaved in the Day of the LORD JESUS. Let no Man therefore be tenderer of them, than of GOD's Honour, nor, by ſparing their Bodies, hurt their Souls. If they will venture to offend GOD, let them be ſure to provoke the Juſtice and Indignation of Men, and pay whatever Penalty the Law inflicts; that if they will not obey "for Conſcience-ſake, they may "for Wrath, that the Name of GOD be not blaſ-"phemed."

BUT let me rather end with hoping, deſiring, and with praying, that the Senſe of GOD's Honour, the Senſe of his Command, the Senſe of their Duty, and their great Danger, may influence them to Conſideration, Repentance, and Amendment, more than the Fear of Man; and that, by all, or any Means, they may be evermore reſtrained from taking the Name of the LORD their GOD in vain; and may for evermore remember, *that He will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh His Name in vain.*

FINIS.

4.

AN ADMONITION AGAINST PROFANE AND COMMON SWEARING.

IN

A LETTER from a MINISTER to his PARISHIONERS.

To be put privately into the Hands of Persons who are addicted to SWEARING.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,

EDMUND GIBSON, D. D.

Late Lord Bishop of LONDON.

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1794.



A PRIVATE

ADMONITION

Againſt Profane and Common

SWEARING.

Neighbour,

IT is out of a true Reſpect I have for you, and a hearty Concern for the Good of your Soul, that I put into your Hands this *private* Admonition againſt SWEARING; ſince the *publick* Warnings you have heard from the Pulpit do not ſeem to have had their Effect upon you. If you will think and

conſider, you cannot but know that the Cuſtom of Vain-Swearing, into which you are unhappily fallen, is a great Sin, againſt which God has denounced very heavy Judgments. And how nearly it concerns me, who am your Spiritual Paſtor, to *warn* you of your Danger, you will ſee by the Command which God has laid upon every Paſtor of his Church, (Ezek. iii. 18.) *When I ſay unto the Wicked, Thou ſhalt ſurely die, and thou giveſt him not Warning, nor ſpeakeſt not to warn the Wicked from his wicked Way to ſave his Life; the ſame wicked Man ſhall die in his Iniquity, but his Blood will I require at thy Hand.*

Wherefore, I beſeech you to take this Admonition in good Part, and to liſten to it as a Warning ſent you by the Providence of God, to deliver your Soul from eternal Deſtruction. Do not ſpend Time in gueſſing or enquiring how I came to underſtand that you are particularly guilty of this Sin; but ſince you know it to be true, and the Conſequence of your going on without Reproof ſhould have been your Ruin for ever; eſteem it as a ſpecial Mercy and

Favour

Favour from God: And in Token of your receiving it as ſuch, conſider and lay to Heart this plain Account.

I. Of the *Sinfulneſs* of Vain-Swearing.
II. Of the *Folly* of it.

I. Conſider the great *Sinfulneſs* of this Practice; which you may eaſily learn, as well from the expreſs *Precepts* whereby the Scripture forbids it, as from the many *Aggravations* of the Guilt of this Sin above any other.

1. Conſider how plainly the Scripture forbids all Idle and Vain-Swearing, of what Kind ſoever, whether by things in Heaven, or Things on the Earth.

To begin with the vain Uſe of the *Name* of GOD (which is ſo often in the Mouths of common Swearers:) You know what the Third Commandment tells you, (Exod. xx. 7.) *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him Guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain.* For although his Commandment, as given to the *Jews*, was only underſtood

to forbid *Perjury* or *Falſe Swearing*; yet being interpreted in a Chriſtian Senſe, it is a Precept againſt all vain and common Swearing, and eſpecially by the Name of *God*. I ſhall put you in Mind, by and by, how expreſly our Saviour forbids Chriſtians to ſwear by the Creatures, becauſe of the Relation they bear to their Creator; and becauſe as they are the Creatures of God, to ſwear by *them* is in Effect to ſwear by *God*; and then it muſt be a Sin of a much higher Nature, for Men in their common Converſation to ſwear directly by *God* himſelf.

The Name of God is pronounced in Scripture, to be holy, and glorious, and reverend; and it is one Part of the Prayer, which our Saviour taught us, that *God's Name may be hallowed*; that is, that it may be thought and ſpoken of by us and all other Perſons, with great Serioufneſs and Reverence, as a Name that is ſanctified, and ſet above common and ordinary Uſe. Which ought to teach all Chriſtians to uſe it ſparingly and reverently; not to bring it too familiarly into any of their Diſcourſes concerning the Affairs of this World,

World, much leſs to mix it daily and hourly (as the common Swearers do) with their Sports and Paſſions, their Riots and Exceſſes.

2. The ſame Thing is to be ſaid of the Name of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Son of God, and the Saviour of Mankind; concerning whom the Scriptures declare, (*Phil.* ii. 9.) *That God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name; that at the Name of* JESUS *every Knee ſhall bow, of Things in Heaven and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth.* A Declaration that ſhould teach every Chriſtian the greateſt Reverence to that holy and bleſſed Name, through which alone he can be ſaved. And yet how little is this remembered or regarded by many careleſs and profane Chriſtians, who allow themſelves in a wicked Habit of bringing in the ſacred Name of JESUS and CHRIST to expreſs their Wonder, and confirm their Promiſes or Purpoſes, in the moſt ſlight and trivial Matters.

Or if they forbear to uſe the Names of *God*, of *Jeſus*, and *Chriſt*, they will not ſcruple to ſwear by their *Maker*, or

their *Redeemer*; although these and the like, being only other *Names* for *God* and *Christ*, are as much a Profanation (when they are mixed by Men with their ordinary Discourse) as the direct Use of the Names themselves. And the Reason is plain, because by the Names of *Maker* and *Redeemer*, the Divine Beings are evidently expressed and understood; and it is from the common and familiar *Use* of Matters Holy and Divine, that the Sin of profane Swearing arises, by whatsoever Names the Divine Things or Beings are expressed.

The Reason why such Names ought not to be mixt with the common Concerns of the World, is, because they are of a divine and heavenly Nature. We ought not to make the Names *familiar*, because the Beings meant and expressed by them are infinitely above us, in Station, Power, and all other Perfections; and are therefore the proper Objects of our Dread and Fear, our Honour and Reverence. Again; such Names ought to be used sparingly, because common Use wears off the Veneration

neration that belongs to thoſe high and glorious Beings, and by Degrees brings the moſt ſacred Things into Contempt. For it is in vain to hope, that the Mind will preſerve a ſerious Regard to the Beings, if the Tongue be allowed a common and unſerious Uſe of the Names.

3. Next to the profane Uſe of ſuch *Names* as ſignify *Beings* that are Divine, is a like profane Uſe of *Words* which ſignify *Things* of a Divine and Holy Nature, ſuch as are proper only to Religion, and the Concern of our Souls and another World; as our *Faith*, our *Redemption*, our *Salvation*, or in general, any Expreſſions which are peculiar to the Holy Scriptures. Theſe are weighty and ſerious Things; and as the Things immediately concern Religion, ſo the Names and Expreſſions are only proper to Religious Exerciſes and Diſcourſes. And it is by no Means conſiſtent with a Chriſtian Converſation to uſe them otherwiſe than ſeriouſly, much leſs to a Habit of uſing them lightly, and leaſt of all to frame them into *Jeſts* (to which the Language of Holy

Scripture is ſo frequently abuſed by profane Men;) or, what is our preſent Caſe, to frame them into *Oaths* and *Curſes*. And yet how common it is with many Chriſtians, in their ordinary Diſcourſe, to deſire this or that to be done *for the Love of God*, or *the Sake of God*, or *of Chriſt*: And to declare the moſt trifling Things to be true, with a ſolemn *Vow*, *upon their Faith*, or *upon their Salvation*, or, *as God ſhall ſave them*, or *judge them*; and to vent their Rage and Paſſion in horrible Oaths, by the *Blood* and the *Wounds* of the Son of God and the Redeemer of Men; the hearing of which is enough to make any ſerious Chriſtian to tremble. All ſuch Oaths (as well as thoſe others by the Names of *God* and *Chriſt*, and of our *Maker* and *Redeemer*) do carry in them a double Guilt. 1. The profaneing of Things by common Uſe, which are ſanctified to a Religious Uſe; and which, as they immediately relate to the great Buſineſs of another Life, do require our moſt ſerious Thoughts and Meditations, and ought never to be uttered in an idle or trifling Way. 2. The

Guilt

Guilt of *raſh* and *Vain-Swearing*, when Men are not called to it, and there is no real Occaſion for it, nor any good or wiſe Purpoſe ſerved by it.

4. For although the Swearing by Things that are *holy* is a great *Aggravation* of Guilt, as it adds Profaneneſs to the Sin of Swearing; yet it is to be remembered, that all Vain-Swearing, by what Things ſoever, in Heaven or in Earth, is expreſly condemned and forbidden by our bleſſed Saviour, (Matt. v. 34, 35, 36, 37.) *I ſay unto you, Swear not at all: neither by Heaven, for it is God's Throne; nor by Earth, for it is his Footſtool; neither by Jeruſalem, for it is the City of the great King. Neither ſhalt thou ſwear by thy Head, becauſe thou canſt not make one Hair white or black. But let your Communication be, Yea, yea, Nay, nay; for whatſoever is more than theſe cometh of Evil.* And in like Manner, St. *James*, (James v. 12.) *Above all Things my Brethren, ſwear not; neither by Heaven, neither by the Earth, neither by any other Oath; but let your yea, be yea, and your nay, nay, leſt you fall into Condemnation.*

Theſe are plain and poſitive Precepts, which ought to be well conſidered and underſtood by the Vain-Swearers; as directly forbidding that, which they (in Contempt of the Authority of our Bleſſed Saviour and his Apoſtle) make their daily and hourly Practice. And the Things which they ought to know and obſerve concerning them, are chiefly theſe. 1. That they were occaſioned by a miſtaken Opinion among the *Jews*, that if they did not ſwear directly by *God*, it was no Sin to ſwear by his Creatures. And conſidering how common it is among Chriſtians; to ſwear by the *Heavens*, by their *Life*, by their *Soul*, and by other Creatures of God, one would think they were of the ſame Opinion of the *Jews*, and had never heard of thoſe clear and direct Precepts of the Goſpel againſt it. 2. They are to obſerve the *Reaſons*, why our Saviour and his Apoſtle forbid this Sort of Swearing; both becauſe the Creatures of God are not in our Power to be uſed by us otherwiſe than he has appointed, and becauſe the immediate Relation which they bear to God as their Creator,

tor, makes the Swearing by them, in Effect, a Swearing by God. 3. The common Swearer is more eſpecially concerned to obſerve the *Cauſe*, and the *Conſequence*, of this Sin. The Cauſe, in what our Saviour here tells him, that it *cometh of Evil*, (either of an evil Heart, void of all Reverence towards God, or of the *evil one*, that is of the Devil.) The *Conſequence*, in what St. *James* adds, that it brings them *into Condemnation*. 4. Let him diligently attend to that moſt excellent Rule for the daily Converſation of a Chriſtian, *Let your Communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay*; in your common Diſcourſe, (of which our Saviour is ſpeaking,) go no farther in enforcing what you ſay, than bare Affirmations and Denials. In Courts of Juſtice, and to ſerve any ſerious and weighty Purpoſe, an Oath *in Truth and Righteouſneſs* may lawfully be taken; but in ordinary Diſcourſe, what our Saviour Chriſt has here ſaid, muſt be the Rule of every Perſon who deſires to maintain a *Chriſtian Converſation*.

Hitherto

Hitherto you have ſeen the *Sinfulneſs* of common Swearing: And every Practice that is ſinful being a Tranſgreſſion of ſome Law, I have ſhewn you, that this is a Tranſgreſſion of a plain and poſitive Law given by *Jeſus Chriſt*. And the more clear and expreſs this Law is, the greater is the Guilt of going on in an open Contempt of it.

2. You ſhall now ſee the *Aggravations of Guilt*, which render *common Swearers* more wicked and inexcuſable than any other Sinners whatſoever.

One great Aggravation is, That there is no *Temptation* to Swearing: By the Commiſſion of moſt other Sins, ſome natural Deſire or Inclination is ſatisfied, or ſome preſent Intereſt is ſerved. But the common Swearer has nothing of this to plead in his Excuſe: He cannot ſay, there is any Thing in his *Conſtitution* that inclines him to Swearing, or that he ſerves any worldly Purpoſe or Advantage by it; and therefore he ſins for the Sake of Sinning, only to defy and provoke God. Now the Leſs Temptation there is to commit any Sin, the Commiſſion of it becomes more inexcuſable,

cuſable, and a higher Contempt of the Authority which has forbidden it; and ſince there is no Temptation at all to Vain-Swearing, it is in this Reſpect more inexcuſable, and a greater Degree of Perverſeneſs, and a more obſtinate Contempt of God and his Laws, than any other Sin.

Another Aggravation of the Guilt of Common Swearing, is the *Frequency* of it; that it is repeated every Day, and every Hour, nay, almoſt every Minute, after it is grown into a Habit. Oaths flow from ſuch Men without Thinking, and are a conſtant and almoſt neceſſary Part of their Mirth, Paſſion and Diſcourſe. Now, if every *ſingle* Act of Sin renders us Guilty in the Sight of God; what a dreadful Degree of Guilt muſt reſt upon the Soul of the Common Swearer, who is perpetually adding to the Account, and heaping up Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath. The Tongue is a nimble Member which moves ſwiftly, and, if ill employed, multiplies Sin a-pace: And as the nobleſt Work that belongs to it, is, to ſet forth the Praiſes of God on Earth,

Earth, as the Saints and Angels do in Heaven; ſo he who accuſtoms it to Oaths and Curſes, is daily preparing it for the Language of Hell. And the Time is coming, (if he repent not,) when he will have Cauſe to wiſh a Thouſand Times over, that he had been born as dumb as the Beaſts that periſh; or, ſince he was not, that he had periſhed like them.

When you have read and conſidered this ſhort Account of the *Sinfulneſs* of *Common Swearing*, go on and reflect ſeriouſly, in the next Place,

II. Upon the great Folly of it. Conſider how Men fall at firſt into the Cuſtom of Swearing; that it is never taken up (as all wiſe Deſigns are) with Conſideration, or upon a Foreſight of any Benefit that is like to ariſe from it; but is uſually owing to profane Company, and ſuffered to grow into a Habit through a ſupine careleſs Humour, for want of thinking what is right or wrong, lawful or unlawful, wiſe or fooliſh. And no Practice can be more unreaſonable, than that which

is

is owing purely to the Want of *Thought*, and which Men never could fall into if they would think; that is, if they would make uſe of their Reaſon, and ſhew themſelves Men.

Accordingly, we ſee this Sin reigns moſt when Men are leaſt themſelves, in Times of Rage and Paſſion, and Drunkenneſs; when their Reaſon is gone, and they are indeed no longer Men. Nay, ſome are never guilty of Swearing, but in thoſe ſhort Seaſons of Madneſs; being able at all other Times to ſee the Folly of it, and to comply with their Judgment and Conſcience in abſtaining from it. Which ſhould make the Common Swearer aſhamed, to ſee that he is doing that all Day long, which others (and they none of the moſt Innocent) never will do but in a Fit of Madneſs. And theſe laſt do ſo far well, to abſtain from it at all *other* Times; but their Fault is, that at thoſe Times they are apt to excuſe it, and ſcarce allow it to be a Sin, becauſe (they ſay) they are not themſelves. Whereas, if they would reaſon truly, and like Chriſtians, it muſt be thus:

That

That ſince Rage and Paſſion, and Drunkenneſs, are very ſinful, and to be avoided by every Chriſtian, though they be ſingle and alone; they in whom they are generally accompanied with Swearing, are bound to *double* Diligence in avoiding them, becauſe they know they uſually bring with them a *double* Guilt; namely, their own, and that of Vain-Swearing. One Sin can never be a juſt Excuſe for another; but it is a good Reaſon why Men ſhould increaſe their Care and watchfulneſs againſt one Sin, when they know it uſually brings another with it.

But though theſe Fits of Madneſs, into which Men caſt themſelves, were any Excuſe for Swearing, (as they are certainly none,) yet the common and habitual Swearer would have no Right to plead them. For however they may make his Oaths more *dreadful* and more *horrible* than at other Times, yet, when theſe Heats are over, his Courſe of Swearing and Profaneneſs goes on; and he is ſo far from ſeeking Excuſes, and endeavouring to charge it upon Paſſion and Drunkenneſs, that he ſeems to *approve*

prove and *chuſe* it, adding a *Grace*, or *Credit*, or *Authority*, to his Diſcourſe.

But what Gracefulneſs can there be in a Language, which none uſe but the wild, unthinking, profligate Part of Mankind; and which gives great Offence and Uneaſineſs to every ſober and good Man; and I may add, a Language which is no where ſo common as among the meaner Sort, and in the moſt unpoliſhed Converſation.

And as to the gaining *Credit* or *Belief* to what he ſays; it were well if he would at leaſt refrain from Oaths, till his Credit is called in Queſtion: But where Swearing is grown into a Habit, it breaks out equally upon any Occaſion, or no Occaſion: And in Caſes where there is moſt Occaſion; that is, when they cannot eaſily make themſelves believed, it ſtands them in no Stead; becauſe none will believe him the more for Swearing, who is known to have loſt all *Reverence* for an Oath. The bare Word of a ſober ſerious Man, has far more Weight than a thouſand Oaths of the common Swearer.

Nor

Nor is he leſs miſtaken, when he ſuppoſes, that bold and outrageous Swearing adds to his *Authority*, and makes him appear brave and terrible in the Eyes of his Inferiors. It is true, Rage and Fury are the uſual Fore-runners of *Violence*, and theſe force Obedience for the Time; but as Violence makes him inwardly hated by his Servants, ſo Swearing makes him pitied and deſpiſed by them, and both together make him accounted little better than a Madman by all about him. The only true Way to be ſure of Duty and Reſpect from Inferiors, is Calmneſs and Decency in the Commands and Admonitions of the Superiors. And while Men fancy they ſhew the greater Courage and Bravery, the more frequent and horrible their Oaths are; they ſhould conſider what wretched Courage that muſt be, which conſiſts in provoking and defying Almighty God.

For this is the Folly above all Follies; that though Men know the Judgments which God has denounced againſt this Sin, and what will be the Portion of profane and common Swearers; they

they will yet go on ſo perverſely and obſtinately, to pull down the Divine Vengeance upon their own Heads.

You cannot but know how expreſly the Scripture declares, that God *will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain*, (Exod. xx. 7.) that the Sin of *Vain-Swearing* proceeds in a particular Manner from an *evil Heart*, or the *evil one*, that is the Devil, (*Matt.* v. 37.) and that it brings Men *into Condemnation*, (Jam. v. 12.)

If you knew theſe Things, why would you ſuffer yourſelf, all this while, to be led by a fooliſh Habit, and an unreaſonable Humour, to defy God, and deſtroy your own Soul? If you did not know or conſider them before, lay them ſeriouſly to Heart now; and as you deſire the Favour of God, and the Salvation of your Soul, continue no longer in a Practice which you know will deprive you of both. Believe me, it is a Warning of too great Moment to be ſlighted; and therefore, read and mark diligently what I have here drawn up, to convince you of the Sinfulneſs, the Folly, and the Danger of Vain-

Swearing: And, reflecting at the ſame Time how long you have lived in this Courſe, and what a dreadful Number of Oaths you have already to account for, humble yourſelf in the Sight of God, and earneſtly bewail the Profaneneſs of your Life. Atone for what is paſt, by a hearty Sorrow and Repentance, and ſatisfy yourſelf, that your Repentance is ſincere, by entering into the firmeſt Reſolution, that from henceforth your Converſation ſhall be ſuch as *becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt*. And remember how difficult a Thing it is to govern a Tongue that is accuſtomed to Swearing, from which Oaths ſlide unawares; firſt, pray to God that he will enable you to *ſet a Watch before your Mouth, and keep the Door of your Lips*; and then requeſt of thoſe with whom you moſt frequently converſe, that they will be your Monitors, if at any Time you happen to forget yourſelf.

By theſe Means you will be happily delivered out of a Courſe of great Sin and Folly, and of infinite Danger to Body and Soul. And if this Admonition prove the firſt Occaſion of your

Deliverance, (as I hope, by the Bleſſing of God it will,) praiſe and adore the Goodneſs of his Providence, who hath not ſuffered you to go on ſecurely in your Sin; and make yourſelf the Inſtrument of his Glory, by endeavouring to reclaim others from the ſame unhappy Courſe; which is the moſt proper Satisfaction you can make to God for your former Profaneneſs.

You cannot think, that I have any other *Motive* in ſending this, beſides my own Duty, and your Good. It is a Satisfaction to me to have gone thus far in a Diſcharge of my Duty, as a Miniſter of Chriſt, and your Spiritual Paſtor; but it will be a much greater Comfort, to find that this *Admonition* proves *effectual* upon you. And that God, *who worketh in us all both to will and to do*, will be graciouſly pleaſed to make it effectual, is the earneſt Prayer of,

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and Paſtor.

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5.

AN

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FROM

INTEMPERANCE

IN

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With a more particular View to the Point

OF

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Late Lord Bishop of LONDON.

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Late Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge.

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1818.

1 Cor. ix. 25.

Every Man that ſtriveth for the Maſtery, is temperate in all Things: Now, they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible.

THE Maſtery which the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of, is a Maſtery in Swiftneſs and Activity: being an Alluſion to thoſe *Games* and *Races* that were celebrated among the *Corinthians*, in which the Victors were rewarded with Crowns and Garlands. And ſuch were their Deſires after theſe Victories and Rewards, that they who put in for

the Prize, complied with all Regulations in *Diet*, *Exerciſe*, and the like, which might, by way of Preparation, improve the Strength and Activity; chearfully ſubmitting to the ſtricteſt Abſtinences, and denying themſelves their moſt beloved Pleaſures. Which is implied by the Apoſtle in the Text, when he ſays that they were *Temperate in all Things*, or as it is more forcibly expreſſed in the Original, that they were *reſolutely* Temperate and Regular; ſo as no Allurements could tempt them to Exceſs, no Hardſhips could break their Conſtancy and Reſolution. Now, ſays St. *Paul*, if they do all this to obtain a *corruptible* Crown, much more ſhould we Chriſtians ſubmit willingly and chearfully to all ſuch Regulations and Self-denials as the Goſpel requires, and not be drawn to Exceſs by any Temptation whatſoever, when we have in our Eye an *incorruptible* Crown, or an immortal Crown of Glory.

BUT though the Words may be very well taken in ſuch Extent, as to ſignify an univerſal Government over our inordinate Appetites and Deſires; yet

yet it is plain the Apoſtle in this Place more immediately intends what was the chief Diſcipline in order to the Games and Races he alludes to, namely, a ſtrict Regulation in *Meats* and *Drinks*. And the ſhowing what are the proper Rules and Meaſures of a *regular* Uſe, will naturally lead Men to ſee the great Sinfulneſs of an *irregular* and *inordinate* Uſe of them; Firſt, In *itſelf*; and next, In its *Conſequences* and *Effects*.

But previous to the laying down of thoſe Rules, it muſt be obſerved in general, that the Conſtitutions, Ages, and other Circumſtances among Mankind, being ſo different from one another; nay, the ſame Conſtitution being ſo different from itſelf according to different Times and Seaſons; there can be no one *fixed* Rule or Meaſure in this Point; becauſe the ſame Proportion which to one Perſon is not a ſufficient *Nouriſhment*, may to another be *Exceſs*. So that, what Proportion is neceſſary or convenient, what is within the Bounds of Moderation and what not, muſt in great Meaſure be left to

the Judgment of every particular Chriſtian, upon an honeſt and conſcientous Regard in the true *Ends* of Eating and Drinking: Which are, 'The preſerving of Life,' 'The refreſhing of the Spirits,' and, 'The fitting and preparing ourſelves for the Buſineſs of the Station wherein God's Providence hath placed us.'

1. *Firſt then*, The firſt and moſt immediate End of *Eating* and *Drinking* is the Preſervation of Life. For as God hath planted in every Man a natural Deſire of Life, ſo this is the only Means he has given to ſupport it; and if it is the Duty of every one to *preſerve* and *cheriſh* the Life which God hath given, it is his Duty to uſe and apply the neceſſary Means of doing it. But to determine aright what Kinds or Proportions of Nouriſhment are requiſite for that End, we muſt always remember, that it is *Life* we are to provide for, and not *Luxury*; that the feeding more liberally than Nature requires or can bear, is not the Way to preſerve Life, but to ſhorten and deſtroy it; and that it is very ſinful in itſelf, and very ungrate-

ful

ful and unreaſonable in us, to ſuffer an inordinate Appetite to turn thoſe very Bleſſings to the Deſtruction of Life, which God graciouſly gives us for the Preſervation of it. Not as if Men were bound to live by Weight and Meaſure, or were preſently ſinful if they go beyond the Proportions which will barely ſupport Life. For beſides that the Fixing of this is next to impoſſible, that the Fear of Tranſgreſſing would fill the Mind with perpetual Scruples, and take away the Enjoyment and Benefit of God's Gifts; beſides this, I ſay, the great Guard and Caution which God requires at our Hands, is not ſo much to keep *to* the nice Proportion that will barely preſerve Life, as to keep *from* that which will weaken and deſtroy it; and between the Proportions that will barely ſupport Nature, and thoſe that will overcharge it, there is a Compaſs and Latitude, within which we may innocently enjoy the Bleſſings of Heaven. For,

Secondly, ANOTHER End of Eating and Drinking is to repair and refreſh the Spirits, when they are waſted or

flattened by Thought and Buſineſs. It has pleaſed God to cloath our Souls with Bodies of a weak, heavy, and unactive Conſtitution; which cannot hold out under long Applications of any Kind, without growing faint and weary; and though in no Danger of a Diſſolution, yet are languiſhing and uneaſy. And therefore he has provided Meats and Drinks in the Nature of Remedies, to revive and refreſh the drooping Spirits, and to give new Life and Vigour to the whole Frame. But then we muſt remember to uſe them as God intended them; not ſo as to *lay aſide* or *ſupercede* our natural Strength and Vigour, but only to *aſſiſt* Nature when we find her faint and drooping. We muſt not apply theſe Remedies till Nature calls for them; being either in a State of Hunger and Thirſt, or elſe tired and overcome with Thought and Labour; nor, when Nature does call, muſt we apply them in larger Proportions than ſhe requires, or larger than will fairly anſwer her Needs. It is Time enough to pour in Oil, when we find the Lamp begins to burn faintly,

and

and it is ſufficient to pour in ſo much as may enliven, but not ſmother the Flame. But if Men (either out of Luxury, or a Deſire to pleaſe the Appetite and *pamper* the Body, or in Compliance with Cuſtom, and a Habit of Indulgence) will be continually refreſhing Nature when ſhe has no Need, or overcharging her when ſhe has; this is a direct *Abuſe* of the Bleſſings of God, not only clogs the Spirits, inſtead of refreſhing them, but by accuſtoming Nature to theſe needleſs Aids, makes her forget her own Strength, and to be perpetually craving a Supply of thoſe artificial Spirits: Till, by Degrees, Men have no more Power than the brute Beaſts to reſiſt thoſe Importunities of Appetite, nor any Life and Vigour, but what they derive from thoſe falſe Flames, which quickly expire in Coldneſs and Stupidity. This is the moſt wretched State into which human Nature can ſink; or rather, a ſtate which makes it ceaſe to be human, and turns it into *brutal*. For what is it, in this Life, that more diſtinguiſhes Men from Brutes, than the Government of the Appetite?

and when that is loſt, they are no longer Men, but Beaſts in the Shape of Men. And yet ſo bewitching are the Pleaſures of Taſte, and ſo eaſily are Men's Appetites corrupted, that with a little Indulgence they will inſenſibly ſink them into this miſerable and almoſt helpleſs Condition. Which nothing can remedy or prevent, but a ſerious Regard to the Neceſſities and Conveniencies of Nature uninfected by Habit, and thereupon a ſtedfaſt Reſolution to apply thoſe Refreſhments, only at Times when they are proper and needful, and in ſuch *Proportions* as may make them a real *Refreſhment*, and not a *Burden*.

Thirdly, A third End of Eating and Drinking, is, to fit and prepare us for the Buſineſs of the Station wherein God's Providence hath placed us. Every Man, whether he be High or Low, Rich or Poor, hath ſome certain Work or Buſineſs belonging to his Condition and Circumſtances in the World. And as the Providence of God appoints the Work, ſo the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God afford us thoſe Bleſſings and Refreſh-

Refreſhments, to enable us to go through it with Comfort and Succeſs. From whence it follows, that one great Rule and Meaſure in the Enjoyment of thoſe Bleſſings, is, to uſe and apply them in ſuch a Manner, as may make them moſt ſubſervient to the daily Buſineſs of our Calling and Profeſſion. And this we do, when, in our ordinary Courſe, we make the Seaſons of Eating and Drinking what they ought to be, only ſhort *Retreats* from Buſineſs, and not the *Buſineſs* of Life; when we take Care, in convenient Time, to *return* to the Duties and Offices of our Calling; and to carry with us ſufficient Underſtanding and Abilities to purſue it; and when, what we call the Unbendings of our Mind, which may be ſometimes neceſſary, are rare, and without any Mixture of Riot or Exceſs. An Enjoyment of the Bleſſings of Life, within theſe Rules, is truly a Repairing of our Strength and Spirits, and a real Furtherance in our daily Buſineſs and Vocation; and being ſo, is a *ſober* and *temperate* Uſe of our Meats and Drinks,

and anſwers the End for which God gave them. But whatever is beyond theſe, is an irregular and Sinful Uſe of God's Creatures; when theſe unneceſſary Refreſhments are *long* and *frequent*, and ſo conſume much precious Time that might be *uſefully* and *beneficially* employed, when Men have no other Aim in invigorating their Spirits by theſe liberal Enjoyments of the Bleſſings of God, but that they may ſpend them again in Mirth and Jollity; and when they are ſo far from deſigning them to be *Preparatives* to Buſineſs, that they cannot endure to *think* of returning to Buſineſs; or when their Exceſſes are ſuch, as leave them neither Senſe nor Reaſon to attend it. And this intolerable *Expence of Time* is greatly aggravated by the *Expence of Treaſure*; which, in the richer Sort, is a Defrauding of their indigent Neighbours, who have a Title to their ſuperfluous Wealth; and in the poorer Sort, is the Robbing of their own needy Families, which by the Laws of God and Man ought to be their daily and immediate Care. And both Rich and Poor will find, that

theſe

these are no small *Aggravations* of the Guilt of Gluttony and Drunkenness, when they come to give an Account of their several Talents at the Last Day. Nor will it be an Excuse, however commonly alledged, that they were unavoidably led to their Excesses by their Concerns in the World, since if they are not led to them by *Inclination* also, the Business and the Excess may be easily separated, and in many Instances are so, where there is a sober and virtuous Mind. And the proper Inference from your meeting with those Temptations to Excess in the Course of your Business and Dealings, is not to lay hold of that Pretence for a Cloak to your Intemperance, but to be very *watchful* against such Temptations, and to pray frequently and earnestly for the Grace of God to deliver you from them.

By attending to the three foregoing Heads, you will be able to judge, not only what are the proper Bounds of Sobriety and Temperance, and when it is that you exceed those Bounds; but also how great and heinous the *Guilt* of

of that Exceſs is, and what a wretched Abuſe of the Bleſſing of God: Not only in *forgetting* their *proper* Ends, but in *perverting* them to Ends directly *contrary*; in turning that to the Deſtruction of Life, which God gave for the Preſervation of it; in making that the means of ſtupifying the Spirits, by which he deſigned to raiſe and refreſh them; in transforming themſelves into the State of Brutes, by the very *Helps* that he beſtows for a more vigorous Diſcharge of the Duties and Offices of a rational Creature; and finally, in making *that* the Occaſion of indiſpoſing themſelves for the Buſineſs of Life, which God graciouſly gives to ſupport them under it.

SUCH is the Sinfulneſs of an inordinate Uſe of *Meats* and *Drinks* IN ITSELF, as it is a Perverting of the true Ends of the Bleſſings of God, and a ſhameful Abuſe of human Nature; which was the firſt Point. But, beſides this,

II. It is very ſinful in the EFFECTS and CONSEQUENCES; whether it be Luxury in Eating as well as Drinking,

and

and ſo a devouring the Portion that belongs to others, and an Enflaming and Heightening of the Luſts and inordinate Deſires; or an Exceſs particularly in *Drinking*, which according to the different Conſtitutions of Men, uſually produces in ſome, a Spirit of Rage and Paſſion, and Cruelty; in others, Sullenneſs, Obſtinacy and Ill-nature; and in moſt, great Folly and Indecency in Words and Actions. Not to enlarge upon the Effects of another Kind, which though in ſome Meaſure accidental, are frequently heard of in the Midſt of thoſe Riots and Exceſſes, namely, *Swearing*, *Railing*, *Fighting*, and too often *Murder*. And all theſe are deſervedly accounted ſo many *Aggravations* of the Sin of immoderate Drinking; being either ſuch, as Men know by their own repeated Experience, to be the *uſual* Effects of it, or ſuch at leaſt as they cannot but ſee they *expoſe* themſelves to, as oft as a Provocation falls in their Way.

III. It is with Regard to the *Heinouſneſs* of this Sin, both in its Nature and Effects, that the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſo-

ſolemnly denounces Woes and Judgments againſt it (*Iſa.* v. 11.) *Woe unto them that riſe up early in the Morning, that they may follow ſtrong Drink, that continue until Night, till Wine inflame them*; and again, Verſe 22. *Woe unto them that are mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength to mingle ſtrong Drink.* And becauſe the Men of Might and Strength in this Way, take a perverſe Delight in *overcoming* their Neighbours, nay, are not aſhamed to *glory* in it, as if they had won ſome mighty Prize; therefore another of the Prophets adds a third *Woe* (*Habb.* ii. 15.) *Woe unto him that giveth his Neighbour Drink, that putteſt thy Bottle to him, and makeſt him drunken alſo.* And in the *New Teſtament*, we find the Chriſtians who were guilty of this Vice, ranked amongſt the moſt abominable Sinners, and adjudged to the heavieſt Puniſhments. The Apoſtle, (1 *Cor.* v. 10.) reckons them with the vileſt of Men, *Adulterers*, *Fornicators*, and *Extortioners*; and commands all Chriſtians to avoid their Company, as a public Scandal to their Religion: And, to compleat

compleat their Doom, the ſame Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* vi. 10.) expreſly mentions *Drunkards* among thoſe who *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* A Judgment ſo terrible, and a Name ſo odious, as makes moſt Men unwilling to believe that they have any Concern in it, and to perſuade themſelves, that the Imputation of Drunkenneſs belongs to none, but ſuch as make their *Reaſon* and *Senſes* a daily Sacrifice to an inordinate Appetite. But as the Apoſtle's Caution is in that very Place, *Be not deceived*; do not reckon that your Enjoyments are therefore innocent, becauſe you are able to go away with a tolerable Share of Reaſon and Underſtanding, which in many Caſes is owing only to Cuſtom or an uncommon Strength of Nature; but reſt aſſured, that all Indulgences of this Kind, more than what Nature fairly requires, and more than what are a real Refreſhment to Body and Mind, without Prejudice to Health or Buſineſs, are very ſinful in the Eyes of God, and lay Men under the ſame Condemnation in *Kind*, though not in *Degree*, as Drunkenneſs itſelf does.

IV. But

IV. But when we ſpeak of Refreſhments which Nature deſires and calls for, we muſt carefully diſtinguiſh between the Deſires of Nature *before* a Habit of Intemperance, and *after* it. Nature not vitiated with Cuſtom or Habit, is eaſy and content with a *reaſonable* and *moderate* Refreſhment; but the Cravings of Nature under the Dominion of Habit (if we may then call it *Nature*) are unlimited and endleſs: The more they are indulged, the more eager they are, and never ceaſe till the Senſes and Underſtanding are drowned. They are as much a Diſeaſe, as Thirſt in a Fever: and are no more to be gratified than that is; nay, (if the Matter be rightly conſidered) much leſs, as that is at moſt attended only with temporal Death, and the *certain* Effect of this is Death eternal. And yet, after this Habit is rooted and has got Strength, how willing are Men to indulge it, and how uneaſy if they do not; which ſhuts their Eyes againſt the Unreaſonableneſs on one Hand, and the Danger on the other. But at the ſame Time that they provide for their *preſent* Eaſe,

and

and are pleaſing themſelves with their preſent Enjoyment, they ſhould remember what it will bring forth in the End; that *at the laſt it biteth like a Serpent, and ſtingeth like an Adder*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks of this Kind of Pleaſure, *Prov.* xxiii. 32. In Truth, it is no better than the nouriſhing themſelves for the Day of Deſtruction, and the laying up Fuel for the Flames of Hell.

V. But among the Miſeries of this unhappy State, it is none of the leaſt that where an inordinate Appetite reigns, Reaſon and Conſideration are ſhut out; and when Men are reduced to ſuch a thoughtleſs Condition, they generally go on, without any Senſe either of their Sin or their Danger, and without any Aim or Deſire beyond their preſent Enjoyment. Into which ſtupid State they are gradually ſunk by repeated Acts of Indulgence; and nothing can awake them out of it, but a great Degree of Reſolution, and the *forcing* themſelves to reflect, 'Into what a brutal Condition their Indulgence has brought them;' 'To what ſhameful Abuſes of God's

Bleſſings,

Bleſſings, and of their own Reaſon and Faculties, it has hitherto betrayed them;' and 'To what Dreadful Puniſhments and Miſeries it will certainly conſign them at laſt.' And theſe Reflections being frequently dwelt on, and imprinted more and more upon the Heart, may, by the Bleſſing of God, produce a happy Change, and deliver them out of the dangerous and miſerable Courſe they are in.

VI. But altho' Perſons in this Condition may be brought to acknowledge, that it had been happy for Body and Soul, if they had fallen at firſt into a ſober and regular Courſe, and that then, it is true, thoſe Indulgences were ſo far from being neceſſary, that they were a Load to Nature, and by Conſequence very hurtful; yet now, that Cuſtom has made them neceſſary, and Nature can hardly ſubſiſt without them, they think they may innocently go on; and to part with *them* is to part with Life.

Upon which I obſerve, That altho' Cuſtom is very powerful, and perhaps no one more ſo than that we are now ſpeaking of; yet has not Force enough

to

to make that neceſſary to Nature, which of itſelf is deſtructive to Nature; as all Exceſs moſt aſſuredly is, whether with or without Cuſtom. Nay, ſo far is Indulgence, in any Circumſtances, from being neceſſary to Life, that when a long Courſe of it has brought Life into Danger, the leaving that Courſe is always the firſt Preſcription, without which all other Remedies are uſeleſs and ineffectual. So that, what they ſay is neceſſary to *preſerve Life*, is in Truth only neceſſary to quiet a craving and inordinate Appetite; the gratifying of which is at that very Time the direct and immediate Means of *deſtroying Life*. And as to the preſent Uneaſineſs, it is no Wonder that an Appetite unaccuſtomed to Denials, and which has long been gratified to the full, whenever it called, ſhould be ſo uneaſy under the *firſt* Check or Reſtraint. But if there is Steadineſs and Reſolution enough to maintain the Reſtraint for a little Time, and by that to give a Check to the Current of the Deſires; the Appetite by Degrees will grow more patient and quiet, and they will

find far greater Pleaſure in governing, than ever they found in indulging it.

VII. Let as many therefore, as have already indulged themſelves into a *Habit*, ſtand ſtill, and conſider that they are in a State of the worſt Kind of Slavery; a Slavery of Reaſon to Appetite, a Slavery of the *Human* to the *Brutal* Part. And let them reſolve, once for all, to aſſert the Freedom and Dignity of their Nature, and that though they have lived like Beaſts, they will die like Men. Let them, in a religious Way, look back and ſee how they have abuſed the Bleſſings of God to Luxury and Exceſs, and with how much Goodneſs he has borne the Provocations and waited for their Amendment; and let a Senſe of his Mercy and their own Vileneſs, breed in their Hearts that godly Shame and Sorrow, which worketh Repentance to Salvation: Or, if neither the Force of Reaſon and Religion will do, let the Terrors of the Lord perſuade them not to trifle away their Souls, by continuing in a Courſe, which they know muſt end ſo ſhortly in eternal Deſtruction.

If they ſay it is a difficult Work, the proper Anſwer is, that it is a *neceſſary* Work; and if Men will but think, it can bear no long Conſideration, whether they ſhall be uneaſy now, or miſerable for ever. Where that is the Choice, the true Inference from the *Difficulty* of the Work is, to rouſe themſelves to equal Degrees of *Reſolution* to go through it; and the more ſenſible they are of their own Weakneſs, the more earneſt ought they to be in their Prayers to God, to ſtrengthen and aſſiſt them.

VIII. It muſt be owned, that the Condition of ſuch Perſons, though not deſperate, is exceeding dangerous; and it were to be wiſhed, that the Inſtances of Men's delivering themſelves out of it, were more common than they are. But the more dangerous their Condition is, and the more rare the Inſtances of being delivered out of it, the more powerful Warnings are they to *others*, who are in a good Meaſure innocent, or as yet leſs guilty, not to be betrayed into the ſame Kind of *Slavery*, by Luxury and Indulgence. And the only

Way

Way not to be betrayed into it, is to keep the Reins over the Appetite from the Beginning; and to accuſtom it to frequent Reſtraints, that it may know it is always under Government, and ſo be tame and tractable; or in the Language of St. *Paul* in this very Caſe, (1 *Cor.* x. 27.) to *keep under* the Body, and *bring it into Subjection*.

And indeed, ſuch Reſtraints and Self-denials are a neceſſary Means to preſerve and ſecure Men's Innocence, as they keep them not only from falling into Exceſs, but at a convenient Diſtance from the *Brinks* of it. For if Men ſuffer themſelves to come into the Way of *Exceſs*, or go too near the *Brink* of it, they will frequently loſe the Reins and be plunged in unawares. So that there is no Way to be Safe and Innocent, but to keep an *habitual* Guard and Reſtraint upon the Appetite, out of a due Senſe, 'Of the true Ends and Uſes of Meats and Drinks,' 'Of the great Wickedneſs of abuſing the Bleſſings of God to the Diſhonour of his Religion, and the Shame and Reproach of human Nature;' and, 'Of the unſpeakable

Miſery

Miſery of living and dying in Habits of Exceſs, both in this World and the next. And, together with theſe Conſiderations, there muſt be frequent and earneſt Prayer to God, that he will preſerve upon the Mind a *lively Senſe* of them, and graciouſly afford ſuch Supplies of Grace and Strength, as he ſees needful, to prevent thoſe evil Habits, and to give an effectual Check to all ſuch Acts of Irregularity and Exceſs, as naturally lead to them.

PART II.

The pernicious *Nature of* Spirituous *Liquors.*

THUS far; Intemperance in *Drinking* has been conſidered in *general*, without any Diſtinction of the various Liquors by which it is occaſioned; and, accordingly, the Cautions and Warnings againſt it have been alſo general, and ſuch as equally relate to Liquors of all Kinds. But there is one Sort that deſerves a more *peculiar* Conſideration, as being attended with Circumſtances more dangerous and deſtructive than the reſt; I mean, *that* which is commonly diſtinguiſhed by the Name of SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS. The reſt of them, when under due Regulations and Reſtraints, are ſuch, for the moſt Part, both in *Kind* and *Nature*, as are of neceſſary and daily Uſe, to anſwer the wiſe Ends of Eating and Drinking, which are enumerated above, *viz.* The preſerving of Life, The repairing

pairing and refreſhing of the Spirits when they are waſted by Thought and Labour; and, The fitting and preparing Men for the Buſineſs of the Station in which God's Providence has placed them.

But as it cannot be pretended, that *Spirituous Liquors* are *neceſſary* to Life, ſo, if they be *tried* upon the three foregoing Heads, they will be found upon every one of them, to be *remarkably* pernicious both to Body and Mind, and to have a more *direct* and *immediate* Tendency to the *Defeating* all the wiſe Means and Ends which God has appointed for the Support and Comfort of both.

Upon the firſt Head, '*The preſerving of Life*;' Nothing can be more clear in *Reaſon*, than the *quick* Tendency of thoſe Liquors to ſhorten and deſtroy Life: Not only by depraving the Appetite, and drawing on a Diſreliſh of wholeſome Nouriſhment, as Experience ſhows; but alſo as Phyſicians reaſon, by *hardning* the Proviſions that are ſent into the Stomach, and thereby hindring the Operations of thoſe Helps

which God has provided for a regular *Digeſtion*, and for a kindly Conveyance of Nouriſhment to every Part. Beſides the other fatal Effects which are charged upon them by Phyſicians; as *Palſies* and *Apoplexies*, from their Operation upon the Brain and Nerves; and of *Jaundices* and *Dropſies*, from their Operation upon the Bowels.

Upon the ſecond Head, '*The repairing the Spirits, when waſted with Thought and Labour: Other* Liquors, when moderately taken, cheriſh the Mind, and enliven the Spirits; without calling for any *further* Recruits, till thoſe are waſted again, by attending the Buſineſs of our Station. But the *ſeeming* Relief that the Spirits receive from the Liquors which we are now ſpeaking of, is not only of ſhort Continuance, but frequently runs into Frenzy and Madneſs; inflaming inſtead of comforting; intoxicating inſtead of enlivening. And as through ſuch a violent and precipitate Conſumption, the Spirits they give are ſoon ſpent; ſo do they leave the Body vapid and lifeleſs, and under an eager Longing after a ſpeedy

Recruit

Recruit from thoſe *artificial* Aids; which are ſo many Steps to the Grave, and do, in Truth, deſerve no better Name, than a *ſlower Kind of Poiſon.*

UPON the third Head, '*The fitting and preparing Men to go through the Buſineſs of the Station in which Providence hath placed them:*' If, as has been ſhown, the Uſe of theſe Spirituous Liquors depraves the Appetite, and hinders the Digeſtion and the Conveyance of a regular Nouriſhment to the Whole; it cannot be, but that they muſt by the ſame Degrees impair the Strength, and enfeeble the Conſtitution, and make the whole Man weak and liſtleſs; leſs willing to ſet about Buſineſs, and leſs able to go through the *Labour* and Fatigue of it. Thus it muſt be in Nature, and thus it is daily ſeen to be in Experience and Obſervation.

THIS *Trial* of Spirituous Liquors, upon the three foregoing Heads, gives a ſhort, but clear View of the *peculiar* Tendency of them above all others, to obſtruct and defeat thoſe wiſe Means

which God has graciouſly provided for the Support of Life, and the Preſervation of Health and Strength; and if any Doubt can remain, whether the foregoing Account, conſidered as the Reſult only of private Reaſoning and Obſervation, may not be *aggravated*; it will be ſupported to the Height by the many *public* Repreſentations that have been made from Time to Time, of the ſad Effects of thoſe inflammatory Liquors: Some of which will therefore be ſubjoined, in an *Appendix* to this Diſcourſe.

In peruſing thoſe Repreſentations, it will be obſerved, that the Miſchiefs complained of, do not *All* of them directly and immediately relate to the *Morals* of Mankind; but ſome, to the Diſturbances of public Peace and Order, which are frequently occaſioned by thoſe intoxicating Liquors; and others, to the Damage which the Nation ſuſtains by the Weakneſs and Feebleneſs they bring upon the labouring Part of it; and others again to the deriving thoſe Weakneſſes and Infirmities to the next Generation. But though theſe may ſeem

at

at first Sight to be Considerations only of a *temporal* Nature, and rather *Infelicities* to the Public, than *Sinful* in the Persons; it is to be remembered, that there are *Duties*, which God, the Author of Order and Government, requires of us, as we are Members of a *Society*, for the general Good and Welfare of the *Whole*; and that therefore every Neglect or Transgression of such Duties, becomes an Offence against *God*, as well as against Man. And People ought to be made sensible, that those Injuries done to the *Public*, being the manifest and well-nigh necessary Effects of their sinful Indulgences, will in God's Account be so many *Aggravations* both of the Guilt and Punishment of of them. And however Persons in the *married* State, like many others, may not be much affected with the Injuries they do the *Public*, nor enough concerned about the *Mischief* they do to themselves; they are to be put in mind that in *Them* it is not only irreligious, but unnatural and cruel, to have no Sense or Feeling of the Weaknesses and

Infirmities which they are entailing upon their innocent Progeny.

But the leſs *Senſe* People appear to have of the *Sinfulneſs* of thoſe Indulgences (in themſelves and in their Effects; againſt God and againſt Man;) the greater Need there is for the Miniſters of the Goſpel, as they find Occaſion, to uſe all Diligence in *laying open* the Sinfulneſs of them, and earneſtly enforcing it upon the Minds and Conſciences of their People. And the Need of this is ſtill greater, if what has been frequently ſuggeſted be true, That it is *Above* the Strength of the Civil Power, to lay an effectual Reſtraint upon this growing Evil. For, whether it be curable or not curable in *that* Way, it is *acknowledged* on all Hands to be very *pernicious* in the Effects; and being ſo, it cannot be *denied* on any Hand, that the leſs it *is* under *Temporal* Reſtraints the more Need there is of *Spiritual* Reſtraints; Eſpecially, when the Temptations lie ſo much in *every one's Way*, and when the Appetite is gratified and the Brain intoxicated at ſo *eaſy* an Expence; and when,

when, by little Indulgence, the Cure becomes ſo very difficult.

SUCH Conſiderations, one would hope, ſhould of themſelves and without any other Enforcements, be effectual Warnings to all PARENTS and MASTERS, to uſe their utmoſt Watchfulneſs over thoſe who are under their Care, that none of them be enſnared by theſe Temptations in the *Beginnings* of a Diſtemper, which, when begun, is ſo hard to be cured.

BUT whatever Parents or Maſters may think or do; the Conſideration of the great Danger of thoſe Indulgences, to the SOULS of Men, as well as the great *Difficulty* of being *reclaimed* from them, muſt be ſtrong Obligations upon all PASTORS to exert themſelves in repreſenting to their People both the Danger and the Difficulty; in private as well as public; to all Perſons in general, Old and Young, Superiors and Inferiors, whom the Providence of God has put under their Care: Endeavouring, at the ſame Time, to convince all ſuch as are unhappily *fallen* into thoſe Indulgences, of the *Miſery* and *Danger*

of their preſent Condition, both with regard to this World and the next; and to confirm all others in a *ſtedfaſt Reſolution* to reſtrain the Appetite, and reſiſt the Temptations; as upon other Conſiderations, ſo particularly upon that which St. *Paul* inforces in the Text, "That the greater Care and Watchfulneſs they uſe, and the greater Difficulties and Self-denials they undergo, in governing and ſubduing their inordinate Appetites, in their Paſſage through this Life; the greater will their *Reward* be in the Life to come."

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

Containing ſeveral *Public Repreſentations* of the pernicious Effects of *Spirituous Liquors*.

I.

The great Miſchiefs of Spirituous Liquors among the INDIANS.

IN the Books of the Society for propagating the Goſpel, Mention is made of a ſelect Committee at *Lambeth*, on the 22d of *April* 1710, to conſider of the Addreſs of the *Indian Sachems* to Queen *Anne*, &c. and they came to the following Reſolution among others:

 "That

"That it be recommended to the "Governor of *New-England* and *New-*"*York*, ſtrictly to put the Laws in Exe-"cution againſt ſelling *Rum*, *Brandy*, "and other *intoxicating* Liquors to the "*Indians*, *this being the earneſt Requeſts* "*of the* Sachems *themſelves.*"

II.

In the Abſtract of the Proceedings of the Society for propagating the Goſpel, Ann. 1715, *it is remarked as follows:*

"AMONG the *Indians* of the five "Nations, a Stop hath been put to the "ſo much-expected Progreſs of the "Goſpel, under the Conduct of our "Miſſion from *England*, by debauch-"ing their Morals; which is imputa-"ble to ſome of our Neighbours, in "promoting Riots and Exceſs, by the "Sale of Rum ſo often prohibited; "and during which Traffic, all ſober "Endeavours uſed for their Salvation "muſt be rendered utterly ineffec-"tual."

III.

The humble Repreſentation of the College of Phyſicians in London, *to the Houſe of Commons,* Ann. 1725.

" We the Preſident and College or " Commonalty of the Faculty of Phy- " ſic in *London*, who are appointed " by the Laws of this Kingdom to take " Care of the Health of his Majeſty's " Subjects in *London*, and within ſeven " Miles Circuit of the ſame; do think " it our Duty moſt humbly to repre- " ſent, That we have with Concern " obſerved, for ſome Years paſt, the " FATAL EFFECTS of the frequent " Uſe of ſeveral Sorts of diſtilled Spi- " rituous Liquors, upon great Numbers " of both Sexes, rendering them diſeaſ- " ed, not fit for Buſineſs, poor, a Bur- " then to themſelves and Neighbours, " and too often the Cauſe of weak, fee- " ble, and diſtempered Children, who " muſt be, inſtead of an Advantage and " Strength, a Charge to their Country. " We crave Leave further moſt humbly " to repreſent, That this Cuſtom doth

" every

" every Year increaſe, notwithſtanding " our repeated Advices to the contrary. " We therefore moſt humbly ſubmit " to the Conſideration of Parliament " ſo great and growing an Evil. In " Teſtimony whereof, we have this " 19th Day of *January*, 1725, cauſed " our common Seal to be affixed to this " our Repreſentation."

IV.

Preamble to an Act (2 Geo. II.) *for laying a Duty upon Compound Waters, or Spirits, commonly called* Gin, *&c.*

" WHEREAS the Drinking of *Spi-* " *rits* and *ſtrong Waters* is become very " common among the People of in- " ferior Rank, and the conſtant and " exceſſive Uſe thereof tends greatly to " the Deſtruction of their *Healths*, " enervating them, and rendering them " unfit for uſeful Labour and Service, " intoxicating them, and debauching " their Morals, and driving them into " all Manner of Vices and Wickedneſs;

" the

" the Prevention whereof would be of " the greateſt public Good and Bene- " fit; and whereas it is found by Ex- " perience, That the great Temptation " to ſuch licentious Uſe of theſe per- " nicious Liquors, is from the Cheap- " neſs thereof, *&c.*"

V.

Preamble to an Act (9 Geo. II.) *for laying a Duty upon the Retailers of Spirituous Liquors*, &c.

" WHEREAS the Drinking of Spi- " rituous Liquors or Strong Waters is " become very common, eſpecially a- " mongſt the People of lower and in- " ferior Rank, the conſtant and exceſ- " ſive Uſe whereof tends greatly to the " Deſtruction of their Healths, rendering " them unfit for uſeful Labour and Bu- " ſineſs, debauching their Morals, and " inciting them to perpetrate all Man- " ner of Vices; and the ill Conſe- " quences of the exceſſive Uſe of ſuch " Liquors are not confined to the *pre-* " *ſent* Generation, but extend to *fu-* " *ture* Ages, and tend to the Devaſ-

" tation

" tation and Ruin in this Kingdom,
" &c."

VI.

Preamble to an Act, to prevent the Importation and Uſe of Rum and Brandies in the Province of Georgia, Ann. 1735.

" WHEREAS it is found by Expe-
" rience, that the Uſe of the Liquors
" called Rum and Brandies, in the Pro-
" vince of *Georgia*, are more particularly
" hurtful and pernicious to Man's Body,
" and have been attended with danger-
" ous Maladies and fatal Diſtempers,
" and if not timely prevented, will in
" all Likelihood ruin the ſaid Colony,
" and fruſtrate your Majeſty's good
" and fatherly Intentions, towards ſuch
" of your Subjects as ſhall go to reſide
" in the ſaid Province; And whereas
" we your Majeſty's moſt dutiful Sub-
" jects, the Truſtees for eſtabliſhing the
" Colony of *Georgia* in *America*, have
" received Complaints from the Chiefs
" of ſeveral of the *Indian* Nations in-
" habiting near to your Majeſty's ſaid
" Colony,

" Colony, of great Diſorders, amongſt " them, occaſioned by the Uſe of the " ſaid Liquors, and which are brought " them by the Perſons uſing and carry- " ing on the *Indian* Trade: For Reme- " dy thereof, we the Truſtees for Eſta- " bliſhing the Colony of *Georgia* in " *America*, humbly beſeech your Ma- " jeſty, that it may be enacted, and be " it enacted, that from and after the " Four and Twentieth Day of *June*, " which ſhall be in the Year of our " Lord, One thouſand ſeven hundred " and thirty-five, no Rum or Brandies, " nor any other Kind of Spirits or " Strong Waters, by whatſoever Name " they are or may be diſtinguiſhed, ſhall " be imported or brought aſhore, *&c.*

And then it follows:

" Which Act his Majeſty thought proper to refer to the Conſideration of a Committee of his Majeſty's moſt Honourable Privy Council, who having received the Opinion of the Lords Commiſſioners for Trade and Plantations thereupon, did this Day report to his Majeſty, as their Opinion, That the ſaid

ſaid Act was proper to receive his Majeſty's Royal Approbation. His Majeſty taking the ſame into Conſideration, is hereby pleaſed, with the Advice of his Privy Council, to declare his Approbation of the ſaid Act, and purſuant to his Majeſty's Royal Pleaſure, thereupon expreſſed, the ſaid Act is hereby confirmed, finally enacted, and ratified accordingly.

VII.

In a Preſentment of the Grand Jury of the City of London, Ann. 1735.

" We the Grand Jury of the City of " *London*, met at the preſent Seſſions " at the *Old Bailey*, to enquire of and " preſent ſuch public Nuſances as diſ- " turb and annoy the Inhabitants of the " City, think it our Duty to complain " of the late ſurpriſing Increaſe of " Gin-ſhops, and other Retailers of " Diſtilled SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS, " which we have great Reaſon to ap- " prehend (if not reſtrained) will be " attended with the moſt dreadful and " laſting ill Conſequences.

" To

" To this pernicious Practice is " chiefly owing——That our lower " Kind of People are *enfeebled* and *dis-* " *abled*, having neither the Will nor " Power to labour for an honeſt Live- " lihood, *&c.*"

VIII.

In a Preſentment of the Grand Jury for the County of Middleſex, Ann. 1735.

" We the Grand Jury for the County " of *Middleſex*, taking Notice of the " vaſt Number of Brandy and Geneva " Shops, *&c.* for the Retailing of Gin, " and other Spirituous Liquors; which " being ſold at a very low Rate, the " meaner, though uſeful Part of the " Nation, as Day-labourers, Men and " Women Servants, and common Sol- " diers, nay, even Children, are enticed " and ſeduced to taſte, like, and ap- " prove of thoſe pernicious Liquors " ſold for ſuch ſmall Sums of Money, " whereby they are daily intoxicated

" and

" and get drunk, and are frequently " ſeen in our Streets in a Condition " abhorrent to reaſonable Creatures.—

" It is viſible, that by this deſtruc- " tive Practice, the Strength and Con- " ſtitution of Numbers is greatly weak- " ened and deſtroyed, and many are " thereby rendered uſeleſs to themſelves " as well as to the Community; many " die ſuddenly by drinking it to Ex- " ceſs; and infinite Numbers lay the " Foundation of Diſtempers which " ſhorten their Lives, or make them " miſerable, weak, feeble, unable and " unwilling to work, a Scandal and " Burthen to their Country."

IX.

In a Preſentment of the Grand Jury of the Tower *Hamlets*, Ann. 1735.

" We the Grand Jury for the Liber- " ty of the Tower of *London* and Pre- " cincts thereof, think it our Duty to " repreſent to this Court, the prodigi- " ous Increaſe in the Number of Shops,

" and

" and other Places, for retailing Gin " and diſtilled Liquors, and the many " Enormities that are occaſioned by " its being drank by the meaner Sort " of People in this Kingdom, chiefly " becauſe they can be debauched at a " very ſmall Expence.

" It is with great Trouble that We " obſerve the Number of Gin-Shops to " multiply in every public Street."

X.

In a Report made to the Juſtices of the Peace for the County of Middleſex, Ann. 1735-6.

" It is with the deepeſt Concern " your Committee obſerve the ſtrong " Inclination of the inferior Sort of " People to theſe deſtructive Liquors, " and how ſurpriſingly this Infection " has ſpread within theſe few Years. " Not only the Vicious and Immoral " give into this Practice, but thoſe alſo " who to all appearance are in other " Reſpects ſober and regular: Not

" only

" only one Perſon here and there in a
" Family; but whole Families ſhame-
" fully and conſtantly indulge them-
" ſelves in this pernicious Practice;
" Fathers and Maſters, Children as well
" as Servants.——

" YOUR Committee proceeded to
" enquire according to your Directions
" into the Miſchiefs ariſing from the
" immoderate Uſe of Spirituous Li-
" quors: and more eſpecially of Ge-
" neva: And theſe, to their great
" Concern, appear to be of the higheſt
" Nature, and more laſting Conſequen-
" ces; affecting not only particular
" Perſons and Families, but alſo the
" Trade of the Nation, and the public
" Welfare. With reſpect to particular
" Perſons, it deprives them of their
" Money, Time, Health, and Under-
" ſtanding; weakens and deſtroys their
" natural Strength and Conſtitutions;
" and thereby renders them uſeleſs to
" themſelves, as well as to the Com-
" munity. And when their Spirits are
" raiſed by drinking to Exceſs, they
" are often carried to a Degree of out-

" ragious

" ragious Paſſions, and become bold " and daring in committing Robberies " and other Offences, for an imme- " diate Livelihood.

" FARTHER, They who indulge " themſelves in this pernicious Cuſtom, " are hereby rendered incapable of hard " Labour, as well as indiſpoſed to it; " their Health is ruined, and their " Lives by Degrees deſtroyed."

XI.

In a Royal Proclamation, March 8, 1737, *for putting in Execution the late Act againſt retailing Spirituous Liquors*, the Introduction is as follows:

" WHEREAS, in order to put a Stop " to the *pernicious* Practice of com- " mon and exceſſive drinking of *Bran-* " *dy*, *Geneva*, and other *Spirituous Li-* " *quors*, ſo deſtructive of the Health, " Morals and Induſtry of our Subjects, " and ſo manifeſtly injurious to the " public Peace and Tranquility; an Act " of Parliament was made, *&c.*

XII.

In a Letter of the Lords of the Privy-Council, written by his Majeſty's Command, to the Cuſtodes Rotulorum *of the ſeveral Counties, and bearing Date* March 31, 1743, it is ſet forth,

"THAT the *exceſſive Drinking of* "*Spirituous Liquors* has not been pre- "vented by former Acts of Parlia- "ment, but ſtill continues the ſame; "*and it is there complained of*, As a "Cuſtom deſtructive of the Health, "Morals, and Induſtry of his Majeſ- "ty's Subjects, and to the Peace of his "Kingdom."

FINIS.

6.

THE

EVIL AND DANGER

OF

LUKEWARMNESS

IN

RELIGION.

BEING THE FIRST PART OF THE

LATE BISHOP OF LONDON, DR. GIBSON'S,

FOURTH PASTORAL LETTER.

WITH FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS.

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THE

EVIL AND DANGER

OF

LUKEWARMNESS IN RELIGION.

WHEN St. *John** sets forth the State of Christianity in the Seven Churches of a, together with what was found in each deserved to be approved, or condemned; Fault that he charges upon the *Laodiceans*, *Lukewarmness*. And, by placing it between two other States of † *Cold* and *Hot*, his ning plainly is, that though they were no Means sufficiently careful and zealous Religion, yet being not downright irreli-us, they rested in that *Lukewarm* State, were under no Concern to go on and pro-d to further *Advances* in the Christian Life. reeably to this Description, the *Lukewarm-*

* Rev. iii. 15, 16. † *Thou art* LUKEWARM, *and* r Cold *nor* Hot, *&c.*

neſs in Religion, which is ſo commonly
among Chriſtians at this Day, is generally
Effect of a miſtaken Perſuaſion, That if Peo
go to Church as others do, and give the co
mon Attention to the Buſineſs of their Statio
and keep themſelves from Sins of a groſs
notorious Nature, and are no Way hurtful
injurious to their Neighbours; they are as go
Chriſtians as they need be. By theſe, th
reckon their Salvation ſufficiently provided f
without any Endeavour to grow better,
without examining their Hearts upon what M
tives and Aims they act; "Whether the E
they abſtain from, and the Good they do,
owing to a Senſe of Duty to God, and a V
to a future Reward in the *next* World, or
to the Fear of Man, and the avoiding of S
and Reproach in *this*: "Whether, in attend
to the Buſineſs of their Station, they act u
a Senſe of Duty to God, who has placed the
it, or have no higher Motive or Aim, than
carrying on their *worldly* Views: "Whe
they are, on all Occaſions, as ready to
their Neighbours, as they are fearful to
them; and neither *covet* any Thing they e
nor envy them the enjoyment of it: "W
ther they find any Degree of *Delight* in att
ing the public Worſhip of God, and *endeo*
beforehand to put their Hearts into a pr
Frame for Attention and Edification: "W
ther they ſatisfy themſelves, that they have

al *Reliſh* of Devotion, by praying in *Private* well as in *Public*: And "Whether at the me Time that they abſtain from the Sins of a roſs and more heinous Nature *themſelves*; they ew a ſerious Diſlike of them in *others*, and nd an inward Concern at the Diſhonour that done to God and his Laws.

By theſe Teſts, every one may judge of the rogreſs he has made in the Chriſtian Life; nd if he find none of thoſe Things within him, ut that he has hitherto contented himſelf with bare bodily Attendance upon the public Vorſhip of God, and the following his daily mployment on other Days, and with abſtaining from the more groſs and notorious Acts of n, and from doing any Hurt or Injury to his eighbour, and has reſted finally upon theſe the *Whole* that Chriſtianity requires of him; ch an one is to conclude himſelf to be as yet a very *imperfect* State, or, in other Words, the Number of the *Lukewarm*. A State, that the more dangerous to the Souls of Men, as is uſually accompanied with a Perſuaſion that ey are as good as they need be, and, under at Perſuaſion, are not like to think of growg better. And there is the greater Danger of eir being led to think too *favourably* of their ondition, in an Age which affords them ſo any Examples of *open* and *notorious* Wickedſs of all Kinds, and of a *total* Neglect of the ublic Worſhip of God; with whom they

are more willing to compare themſelves (thank
ing God, that they are not *like other* Men
than with thoſe about them, who have made
greater Proficiency in the Chriſtian Life th
they have done. Whereas, in Truth, neith
the one nor the other ought to be the *Rule*
judging of our ſpiritual Condition. The on
Rule of that Judgment is, the *Holy Scripture*
and eſpecially the *State* of Chriſtianity, as la
down by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and deliver
to us in the Writings of the New Teſtamen
in which the Life of a Chriſtian, in every P
of it, is deſcribed in ſo plain and clear a Ma
ner, that none who reſolve to make it th
Rule of judging, can poſſibly believe, that t
lukewarm State, as deſcribed above, is th
Meaſure of Goodneſs, which the Chriſtian R
ligion requires.

And that Chriſtians may no longer reſt i
that *lukewarm* State, but may ſee the Miſtak
that have led them into it, and reſolve to pr
ceed forward to a State which is truly Re
gious; let the following Conſiderations be
rioufly attended to and laid to Heart.

CONSIDER,

1. *That a Perſonal Preſence in the Churc
without Attention and Devotion, is not an Act
Religion, nor ſuch a Diſcharge of Duty as is at
pleaſing to God.* It is rather an *Offence* to hi
and juſtly accounted an hypocritical Service,
dra

raw nigh to him with our Lips when our Heart s far from him. On the contrary, the repair- ng to the Place of public Worſhip out of a enſe of Duty, and joining ſeriouſly with the ongregation in the Prayers and Praiſes of the hurch, and attending carefully to the Inſtruc- ions which are there delivered, is not only the erformance of a Service acceptable to God, ut moreover it imprints upon the Mind an abitual Senſe of Religion; and this, the more aſting, if it be kept alive, as it ought to be, y the Practice of Devotion in *private*. And oubt not but a ſerious and regular Attendance pon the Ordinances of God will be bleſſed by im with ſuch Supplies of Grace and Strength, s he ſees needful for you; though you are not enſible at what Times, and in what Manner hey are conveyed.

2. *That the ſeveral Stations in Life, together with the Duties belonging to them, are to be conſi- lered as* God's *Appointment; and that a willing Acquieſcence in the Station wherein his Providence ath placed you, and a diligent Attendance on the Duties belonging to it as appointed by him, is in he ſtricteſt Senſe* THE SERVING OF GOD. This s what the Scripture means, when it directs he ſeveral Offices of Life to be performed, *Col.* iii. 23, *as to the Lord and not unto Men.* If he Work be done only to pleaſe Men, or from Fear of their Diſpleaſure, no Service is done o God, nor any Reward to be expected from im. But, on the other hand, the doing it out of

Regard to God, and in a dutiful Compliance with his Appointment, is not only a great Support and Refreſhment to the Mind under the moſt difficult and laborious Employments; but, which is of far greater Moment, it turns the moſt common Offices of Life into Acts of Religion. The Care that the * Goſpel has taken to inculcate the general Duty of *Diligence* in our Stations, and to acquaint us with the particular Duties belonging to the chief Relations in Life, of † Huſband and Wife, of Parents and Children, of Maſters and Servants; is a ſufficient Intimation to us, how great a Part of the Chriſtian Life conſiſts in a regular and *conſcientious* Diſcharge of thoſe Duties. And how pleaſing this is to God, we learn from St. *Paul*; who having particularly enumerated thoſe Relations with the Duties belonging to each, and commanded them to be done *heartily as to the Lord, and not unto Men*, immediately adds (*Coloſ.* iii. 24.) *Knowing that of the Lord ye ſhall receive the Reward of the Inheritance, for ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt.*

3. *The one main Deſign of God, in annexing particular Duties to the various Stations in this Life, is to make Trial of our Obedience in order to another.*

We are now in a State of *Probation*; and the great Proofs of our Obedience to God, are "The purſuing the Buſineſs and Deſigns of the Word

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 11. 2 Theſſ. iii. 11, 12. 1 Tim. v. 8.
† Epheſ. v. 22, &c. Coloſ. iii. 18, &c.

World under a due *Subordination* to his Laws, and Submiſſion to his Will; "The enjoying the Bleſſings of Life, under a juſt Senſe of the Hand from which they come, and of the much greater Bleſſings he has in Store for good Men in another World; and accordingly, "The conducting all our worldly Affairs like thoſe who are ſenſible, that it is God who has appointed us the Work, and that he will reward our diligent Attendance upon it. But when any one confines his Views to this World, and lives as if he had no Dependance upon God, nor regard to him in carrying on his Deſigns, and conſiders not the *Connection* there is between the Diſcharge of the Buſineſs of this Life, and our *Condition* in the next; we are not to wonder, that in ſuch an one, the Senſe of God and Religion wears off apace.

4. *That as this Life is a State of Probation in which God is training us up for another; he expects from us* Improvements *in Goodneſs of all kinds, and freſh Proofs of Obedience to him, in Proportion to the Time he allows us in this World, and the Opportunities he gives in the Courſe of it.* The want of conſidering this, is, without doubt, one great Cauſe of Lukewarmneſs in Religion. When Men think they are good enough already, they have no Concern but to keep themſelves from growing worſe; not being ſenſible of the *Imperfect* State they are in, nor conſidering that there is no ſuch thing as a *Stand* in Religion. If

they are not going *forward*, they are certainly going *backward*. And from hence ariſes the Duty of Self-Examination, and of comparing our Lives with the Rules of the Goſpel, to let us ſee the Truth of our Condition, whether we are going backward or forward; and, by ſhewing us our Failings and Imperfections, to excite us to watch and pray againſt them, and to enter into Reſolutions of better Improvement for the Time to come; a Work very proper at all Times, but more eſpecially when we are to renew our Covenant with God in the Holy Sacrament.

5. *That there are Sins of* Omiſſion, *as well as Sins of* Commiſſion. It is not enough that you do no Hurt or Injury to your Neighbour, unleſs you be ready to take all proper Opportunities of doing him *good*. It is not enough that you refrain from caſting unjuſt Cenſures upon him, unleſs you be ready to vindicate his good Name, when you hear him unjuſtly cenſured by others. It is not enough that you refrain from doing Diſhonour to God yourſelves, unleſs you ſhew a becoming Zeal to diſcountenance it in others. It is not enough that a Magiſtrate, Parent or Maſter, be regular in their own Lives, unleſs they exert the Authority which God has given them, to puniſh and reſtrain Irregularities in thoſe, whom his Providence has put under their Power and Government. The *Commiſſion of Sin* is in its Nature more daring

and

and uſually attended with a greater *Degree of* Guilt, than the *Omiſſion of Duty*. But ſince the *Duties* of Life are the Commands of the ſame God who forbids the Sins; it is ſtrange to ſee, with what Indifference the *Omiſſions* of Duty are looked upon by lukewarm Chriſtians, and how little Senſe there is of the *Guilt* of forgetting and neglecting them.

6. *That the Rules and Meaſures of Duty muſt be taken from the Word of God, and not from the Opinions of the World.* For Inſtance: Anger, Malice, Envy, and other Qualities of the like Nature, paſs among Men for little more than Frailties and Infirmities; but if you look into the New Teſtament, you will find them ranked among * Sins of the moſt heinous Nature, and moſt inconſiſtent with the Profeſſion of a Chriſtian; and the contrary Duties of Love, and Meekneſs, and Forgiveneſs, recommended and inſiſted on, as neceſſary Parts of the Chriſtian Life. Nor is it leſs dangerous to truſt to the Opinion of the World, concerning the *Goodneſs* of your Actions; which depends not ſo much upon the outward Appearance, as upon the inward *Motives* and *Principles* upon which you act; and theſe can be known to none but God and yourſelf. In either of theſe Caſes, if you take your Eſtimate from the Opinion of the World, you run the Hazard of being greatly deceived; and may reckon your Condition

* Epheſ. iv. 31. Coloſ. iii. 8, 12. Gal. v. 22, 23.

very good, when you are at beſt in a very imperfect and lukewarm Way.

7. *That the evil Thoughts and Intentions of the* Heart, *when entertained, harboured, and approved there, have the ſame Guilt in the Account of God, as if they were carried into Execution.* He ſees every Motion of the Heart, and judges of Men by the *Diſpoſitions* and *Deſigns* he finds there. If there be firſt a *willing* Mind, he accepts and rewards *according to what a Man hath, and not according to what he hath not.* So, by the ſame Rule, if there be a Mind *willing* to ſin, and only a Want of Power or Opportunity to execute, he condemns and puniſhes, as if it were actually committed.

8. *That the ſtricteſt Obſervance of one Branch of Duty, will not atone for the Neglect of another.* True Religion conſiſts in a due Regard to *every* Branch of Duty, to be performed and attended in their *proper* Seaſons. The Attendance upon the Buſineſs of Life will not excuſe the Neglect of God's Worſhip; nor will the Attendance of God's Worſhip excuſe the Neglect of the Buſineſs of Life. Much leſs will a Zeal in one Branch of Duty, which happens to be agreeable to our Inclinations, atone for a Neglect of other Branches to which our Natures are more averſe. Every Branch of Duty is equally commanded by God, and all, as ſuch, are equally binding; and our Obedience to him is *chiefly* ſhown in an Obſervance of thoſe Duties to which

corrupt

corrupt Nature is averſe, and an Abſtinence from thoſe Sins to which it is inclined. And here is not a Miſtake that is either more dangerous or more abſurd, than to flatter one's ſelf, that the greateſt Diligence about ſome *Duties* which God has commanded, will atone for the Enjoyment of *Sins*, which he has as expreſly forbidden.

You will obſerve, without my telling you, that the Deſign of what I have hitherto written, has been "To ſhew Lukewarm Chriſtians how imperfect a State they are in, and wherein the Imperfections of it conſiſt: "To point out to them the ſeveral Miſtakes about Religion and the Duties of it, which are apt to lead Men into that State, and confirm them in it: "To ſatisfy thoſe who are engaged in the Cares and Buſineſs of the World, that they can never want Opportunities to ſerve God, and approve themſelves to him, ſince a religious State is ſo far from being inconſiſtent with the ordinary Employments of Life, that a great Part of Religion conſiſts in a *diligent* and *conſcientious* Attendance upon the Buſineſs of the Station in which Providence hath placed them: And, finally, "To excite them, ſo far as their Station and Condition will fairly admit, to a ſerious Uſe of ſuch other Offices and Exerciſes of Religion, public and private, as tend to their ſpiritual *Improvement*, and to carry them on from one Degree of Goodneſs to another."

And

And for their further Encouragement to give a due Attention to the Rules I have laid down agreeably to the Senſe of Scripture; let them reſt aſſured, that by entering upon the Courſe to which they are here directed, and purſuing it in earneſt, they will remain no longer in the Number of the Lukewarm, but may ſafely conſider themſelves as true and ſincere *Servants of God*. And if they perſevere in that good Way, they may aſſuredly depend upon the Divine Aſſiſtance in this their religious Courſe, and rely upon the Merits of Chriſt for the Pardon of all ſuch Sins, Failings, and Imperfections, as are, more or leſs, unavoidable in this mortal State: Not doubting, but that they ſhall be finally accepted and rewarded of God according to the Degree and Meaſure of Goodneſs to which they have arrived in this Life.

This is a Progreſs in the religious Life, and a ſolid Ground of Comfort both in Life and Death, which they may attain who are moſt engaged in the Affairs of this World, if they will purſue them under the Direction of religious Principles, and under an habitual Senſe of the Fear of God.

And as for thoſe, to whom God has given greater Degrees of Leiſure from the Buſineſs of Life, to attend more frequently to Reading, Prayer, and other Exerciſes and Offices of Religion; they muſt remember that he will expect from them greater *Improvements* in Purity and Goodneſs,

Goodneſs, ſuitable to the ſpecial *Advantages* and *Opportunities* which he beſtowed upon them.

THUS far we have treated of LUKEWARMNESS in Religion; and have ſhewn "What it is, and wherein it conſiſts," "What are the proper Means of delivering ourſelves out of that State," and, "What are the proper Evidences of our being ſo delivered."

BUT tho' this is a conſiderable Progreſs in the Chriſtian Life, and places us in the Number of *God's Servants*, while we perſevere in the ſame good Courſe; yet we muſt always remember theſe two Things: The firſt, That as long as we continue in this frail mortal State, which is our State of *Trial* and *Exerciſe*, we are very liable to *relapſe*, and to loſe Ground, if there be not due Care, Watchfulneſs, and Reſolution on our Part to maintain it. And the ſecond, that the only ſure Preſervative againſt relapſing into the State of Lukewarmneſs, is, a ſincere Endeavour to be *growing* more and more in Goodneſs.

I. As to the Danger of Relapſing, and the Neceſſity of guarding againſt it; there needs no other Proof, than the Account which the Scripture and our own Experience give us of the general Frame and Condition of human Nature, and of the manifold Temptations with which we are encompaſſed: That, in our natural State, there is a great Proneneſs to Sin, and

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an Averſion to the Duties of Religion; our Deſires carnal and corrupt, our Inclinations bent upon earthly Delights and Enjoyments, and our Hearts eſtranged from Heaven and heavenly Things; That, as our Deſires are naturally bent upon the World; ſo the World meets and gratifies thoſe inordinate Deſires with a Variety of Enjoyments and Entertainments; wherein the Corruptions of our own Hearts, and the Examples of a wicked World, are combining, daily and hourly, to carry us to Exceſs: that our Adverſary the Devil, a Spirit of great Cunning and Subtlety, and of implacable Enmity againſt God and Man, feeds our Imaginations, and heightens and inflames our inordinate Deſires; and ſo manages all the Temptations, both within and without us, as they may beſt ſerve his own Purpoſes; which are, the drawing us from our Obedience to God, and making us Slaves to his own Dominion, and bringing us at laſt to that State of Torment and Miſery, to which he and his wicked Spirits are already conſigned. St. Paul ſpeaks of the Devil (2 *Cor.* ii. 7.) as endeavouring by all Means poſſible *to get Advantages over us*; and he expreſſes the Art and Cunning of this Tempter under the Name of *Wiles* and *Snares*, (2 *Tim.* ii. 25.) The Vehemence of his Aſſaults and Impreſſions, is deſcribed by him under the Similitude of *fiery Darts*, (*Epheſ.* vi. 16.) and his Rage and Eagerneſs in the Deſtruction

truction of Souls, is compared by another Apoſtle, (1 Pet. v. 8.) *to a Lyon roaring after his Prey.*

From hence it appears, that the Condition of a Chriſtian in this World, when rightly conſidered and underſtood, is not by any Means a State of Eaſe and Security, as too many Chriſtians think and make it; but a State of great Danger and Difficulty. And therefore the moſt uſual Similitude under which the Scripture repreſents the Life of a Chriſtian, is that of *Warfare*; as implying great Degrees on one hand, of Danger and Difficulty, and on the other hand, of Watchfulneſs and Diligence, and Reſolution. It ſpeaks of a continual War within us, (*Gal.* v. 17.) *the Fleſh luſting* or ſtriving *againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh, and theſe two contrary*, i. e. declared Enemies and Adverſaries *one to the other*; and it tells us elſewhere, (*Epheſ.* vi. 12.) that the Warfare of a Chriſtian is not only againſt Fleſh and Blood, but that he muſt alſo fight and wreſtle with Satan and his wicked Spirits; *againſt the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, againſt ſpiritual Wickedneſs in high Places.* And in the whole Courſe of this Warfare, that which the Scripture warns us againſt above all other things, is *Supineneſs* and *Security*; that we do not ſuffer ourſelves to be *ſurpriſed* by our ſpiritual Enemy. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation*, is our Saviour's Leſſon; who

who alſo has taught us, as oft as we pray for our daily Bread, to pray that we be not *led into Temptation, but delivered from the evil One*, i. e. the Devil.—*Be ſober, be vigilant*, ſays St. *Peter*, 1 Epiſt. v. 8. *becauſe your Adverſary the Devil walketh about ſeeking whom he may devour.* And St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 13. *Watch ye, ſtand faſt in the Faith, quit ye like Men, be ſtrong*: And the ſame Apoſtle, *Phil.* ii. 12. *Work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, with a perpetual Jealouſy over yourſelves, leſt ye either grow ſlack and remiſs in the Work, or leave it at any Time to be employed in the Works of Sin and Satan.

II. This is that habitual Care and Watchfulneſs which the Goſpel recommends and enjoins to Chriſtians, as neceſſary to ſecure their Innocence againſt all Temptations within and without, and to finiſh their Courſe with Safety and Succeſs. And our *Sincerity* in purſuing and carrying on this neceſſary Work, will not only ſhew itſelf in a conſcientious Endeavour to refrain from the *outward* Acts of Sin, but it muſt alſo appear, 1. In Watching the *inward* Motions of the Heart, and all other Tendencies and Approaches toward Sin. Nor will it only appear in an habitual Endeavour to avoid Sin, and ſubdue the Motions to it: but 2. In a like Endeavour to be always *growing* in Goodneſs and Religion.

Firſt

Firſt, After Chriſtians have delivered themſelves out of a State of Lukewarmneſs, and are arrived to a ſettled Diſpoſition and Deſire to avoid Sin; their Sincerity in the Work of their Salvation muſt further ſhew itſelf, in keeping a diligent Watch over their Hearts, and in labouring to reſtrain and ſuppreſs the inordinate Motions of them. We all of us make a ſolemn Promiſe to God at our Baptiſm, "That we will renounce the Devil and all his Works, the vain Pomp and Glory of the World, with all covetous *Deſires* of the ſame, and the carnal *Deſires* of the Fleſh, ſo that we will not follow nor be *led* by them." And as it is the great Work of a Chriſtian, while God continues him in this World, to make good that Promiſe, and thereby to keep himſelf in conſtant Covenant with God, ſo is it a Work that requires great Watchfulneſs and Application, abundantly enough to employ all the Zeal that human Nature is capable of exerting. The Devil, as he is a powerful and malicious Enemy; ſo is he very ſubtil in the Management of his Temptations. At firſt, for Inſtance, the Conſciences of Men are apt to ſtartle at the Thoughts of very *great* Sins, and therefore he moulds and prepares their Hearts for thoſe, either by offering Sins of a leſſer Size which they will ſwallow, and ſo, by Degrees, *corrupting* and *hardening* their Conſciences; or elſe by Enjoyments, which ſeem to be innocent, and are ſo reputed in the World,

but

but yet have a ſecret Tendency to particul
Vices, and ſeldom fail to betray Men into the
in the End. And ſince the Devil is thus cu
ning and ſubtil, it behoves us to beware di
gently that we indulge not ourſelves, either
Sins that in the Eyes of the World are accoun
ed ſmall and inconſiderable, which are always
many Steps and Preparations to greater; or
Diverſions and Enjoyments, which, however i
nocent in themſelves, we find, by our own E
perience and Obſervation, are the Means of lea
ing and betraying us into Sin. If Play, for i
ſtance, tho' with Moderation, beget Anger a
Oaths; if Company is apt to betray us into E
ceſs; if Objects of any Kind raiſe in the He
impure or inordinate Deſires; our Zeal agai
Sin, muſt appear in avoiding all theſe tempti
Occaſions and Objects, upon the ſame Pri
ciple, that we would avoid the Sins themſelve
Again, all Sin has its Birth in the Deſires a
Imaginations of Men; and if it be taken ear
and oppoſed there, it may be eaſily ſtifle
bnt being ſuffered to reſt in the Heart, and
work upon the Thoughts and Deſires with a
Degree of Pleaſure and Delight, it gets he
and is hardly to be reſiſted. And therefore o
Zeal for the Preſervation of our Innocen
muſt be ſhewn, in watching the firſt Entran
of ſuch Deſires and Imaginations into the Hea
and not ſuffering them to reſt and harbour the
but immediately to drive them out. Add
this, that there is in every Man's Frame a
Natu

ature a ſtronger Diſpoſition to ſome Sins and ices, than to others; and every one's parti-lar Calling, and Manner of Life, lays him pen to ſome particular Temptations, as In-ſtice, Intemperance, and the like. Which iſpoſitions of Nature, and Misfortunes of alling, a true Chriſtian Zeal will mark out nd obſerve; and (ſeeing them to be their *eakeſt* Sides, where Sin and Satan are moſt ke to enter) will guard them with a Care and Vatchfulneſs proportionable to the Danger. urther yet; In this neceſſary Work, of op-oſing our inordinate Deſires, and watching gainſt Temptations, our Zeal too often cools nd abates; and being diverted by the Bu-neſs, or ſoftened by the Diverſions of the Vorld, we are apt to grow ſlack and remiſs in ur ſpiritual Warfare; and therefore there is reat Need to enliven our Zeal and to nouriſh e Flame, by frequent Remembrances of our anger, and by repeated Vows and Reſolu-ons to hold faſt our Innocence, and to con-nue ſtedfaſt unto the End.

THESE are the proper and neceſſary Expreſ-ons of a true Chriſtian Zeal to ſubdue Sin, nd to maintain our Innocence; and however *kewarm* Chriſtians may not be ſenſible of the ifficulty of this Work, becauſe they never en-age in it, never ſet themſelves to obſerve or ſiſt their inordinate Deſires, but comply with em and give them their free Courſe; yet ey, who are Chriſtians in earneſt, do not only

only find this a difficult Work, but a Work to which the Powers of Nature, in this corrupt State, are by no Means equal; and therefore, in a humble Senſe of their own Weakneſs, they apply themſelves daily to God in Prayer, that he will vouchſafe them a ſufficient Meaſure of his Grace to aſſiſt and ſupport them in the ſpiritual Combat, or in the Words of the Apoſtle, (1 *Cor.* x. 13.) *That he will not ſuffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the Temptation make a Way to eſcape, that they may be able to bear it.*

Secondly, After Chriſtians have in earneſt renounced Sin, and by their own Endeavours and the Grace of God have fortified themſelves againſt the Temptations to it; that which muſt give them a full Proof of their *Sincerity* in the Work of their Salvation, and at the ſame Time, an effectual Security againſt *Relapſing*; is, an habitual Deſire and Endeavour to be *growing* in Goodneſs and Religion. For this is one great End of ſubduing the Habits of Sin, To make Way for the Habits of Goodneſs; that when the Heart is in good Meaſure cleared from the Roots of Wickedneſs, the Seeds of Piety and Religion may thrive and flouriſh in it; or in other Words, that thoſe Temptations which have hitherto had the greateſt Power over us, loſing their Strength, and growing every Day weaker, we may go on with greater Delight and Stedfaſtneſs in a daily Practice of the Chriſtian Duties; of Peace and Charity; Patience

and

d Submiſſion to the divine Will; Meekneſs d Humility; Temperance and Chaſtity; and e like; frequently examining our Hearts, to tisfy ourſelves how the Chriſtian Graces thrive ere, and deſiring above all things to ſee them ll growing, and to be cultivating them dili- ntly for that End, and improving them more d more into ſettled and confirmed Habits, as ng as it ſhall pleaſe God to continue us in this orld. For as the great Benefit of Life, is e Opportunity it gives Men, of approving emſelves more and more to God by a Courſe Obedience, and of growing to greater De- ees of Perfection in Goodneſs, in order to eater Degrees of Glory in the next World; it ought to be every Man's great Care, that eligion keep Pace with Life, and that his owth and Improvement in Goodneſs bear me Proportion to the Time and Opportunity at God gives. And this Growth and Im- ovement, in Oppoſition to *Lukewarmneſs* in eligion, is not a *voluntary* Exerciſe of Zeal in s or that particular Perſon, but what is ex- eſly required of every Chriſtian, as a neceſſary uty of the Chriſtian Life. Beware, ſays St. ter, (2 *Pet.* iii. 17, 18.) *Beware, leſt being away with the Error of the Wicked, ye fall m your own Stedfaſtneſs; but* grow *in Grace, d in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour ſus Chriſt:* And St. *Paul,* (2 *Cor.* vii. 1.) *t us cleanſe ourſelves from all Filthineſs of the eſh and Spirit,* perfecting *Holineſs in the Fear of God.*

God. And it is this *Progreſs* in Religion, t
our *Zeal* and *Activity* in it, that the ſame Apoſt
means, when he compares the Courſe of a Chri
tian to a Race. *So run*, ſays he, that is, wi
ſuch Speed and Quickneſs, *that ye may obta*
and not fall ſhort of Heaven, by Slowneſs i
your Chriſtian Courſe: And he tells us, (*Ph*
iii. *v.* 12.) that though he had not already a
tained to Perfection, (which no Man in this co
rupt State ever can do) yet he *preſſed towa*
the Mark, he laboured to come as near as h
could to the higheſt *Perfection* of the Chriſti
Life, and that *for the Prize of the high Calli*
of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

And what St. *Paul* did in this Caſe, eve
Chriſtian ought to be daily doing; that is, g
ing on nearer and nearer to Perfection; giv
all Diligence, not only to grow in this or t
particular Grace, but to be making an eni
and uniform Progreſs and Improvement in
the Duties of the Chriſtian Life: That ſo, t
may be ſecure againſt relapſing into a ſinful
lukewarm State, and in no Danger of be
declared at the laſt Day *barren and unfruitful*
the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chr
as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; and, above all, That t
may not fail of that exceeding great Rew
which God has promiſed to all thoſe, who
thus careful to walk in his Ways, and to p
ſevere therein unto the End.

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM

7.

A SERMON ON SELF-MURDER.

ZACHARY PEARCE, D.D.
Late Lord Bishop of ROCHESTER.

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JOB II. 10.

SHALL WE RECEIVE GOOD AT THE HAND OF GOD, AND SHALL WE NOT RECEIVE EVIL?

THESE are the Words of JOB, when he was become one of the moſt miſerable of Mankind: he had loſt all his Cattle and his Servants, in which his Wealth conſiſted; and all his Children, on whom his Affections were ſtrongly placed: and the Loſs was the greater, becauſe it was ſo ſudden, and becauſe all his Calamities came upon him ſo quick one after another, that he had ſcarcely any time between each to fortify his Mind, by reaſoning upon what had paſt, or preparing himſelf for what might come. Nor was this all; for we are told ſoon afterwards, that he was *ſmitten with ſore boils, from the ſole of his foot to the crown of his head*; and that, in this deplorable State, *he ſat down among the aſhes*, as the Eaſtern Cuſtom was upon ſuch Occaſions, *ver.* 8. Then it was, when his mind was oppreſs'd

with Grief, and his Body was full of Pain, that he expreſſed his Sentiments in the Queſtion of the Text, *Shall we receive Good at the hand of* God, *and ſhall we not receive Evil?*

You ſee that, amidſt all his Loſſes, he had not loſt his Senſe of Duty to God: he knew how to argue aright upon the Subject of Calamities, even when he was ſurrounded by them. He conſidered all his Diſtreſſes as happening by the divine Appointment or Permiſſion; and therefore he was ſo far from *charging God fooliſhly*, that he even pleaded for the Neceſſity of Submiſſion to Him under all the Evils of Life.

There might be Wiſdom, nay, there might be Goodneſs, in God's ſuffering theſe Calamities to befet him: Tho' they were not then viſible, yet the Event might fully ſhew them, and juſtify the Dealings of God with his Servant. Thus the pious Sufferer ſeems to have reaſoned within himſelf, and to have ſupported his Spirits by ſuch Reflections, againſt ſinking under his Sorrows, and flying to Death, as to a Refuge and Sanctuary, from the Burden of a calamitous Life.

A very different Method from that which too many among us are apt to take under Afflictions, in no wiſe to be compar'd to

those of JOB, either for Weight or Number: The Practice of *Self-Murder* is very prevailing among us, as we see by the too frequent Instances of it: For which Reason, and because some late Attempts have been made, not merely to palliate and excuse this unnatural Action, but even to prove the Lawfulness and Reasonableness of it; it may be proper to offer some Reflections on this Subject, that you may be the better enabled to confirm yourselves, and (as Opportunity offers) convince the Unfortunate and Distress'd of your Acquaintance, how grievous the Sin is, and consequently, how dangerous to their Salvation: and for this Purpose, I shall confine myself chiefly to the Argument advanced in the Text, that it is our Duty to *receive Evil as well as Good, at the hand of* GOD.

The Opinions of particular Men, or indeed of whole Nations, are (I confess) no certain and infallible Arguments of the Lawfulness, or Unlawfulness of any Practice; but yet it must be allow'd, that they are of some Weight, when they are brought not to *prove*, but to support and strengthen Proofs drawn from Reason. And therefore, before I proceed to enlarge on the Argument offer'd in the Text, it may be of Importance to observe, that (generally speaking) all Kingdoms and States, An-

cient as well as Modern, have agreed in forbidding and condemning Self-Murder: and on the ſame Side ſtand the Opinions of almoſt all the wiſeſt and beſt Men of Heathen Antiquity. PYTHAGORAS* (one of the firſt Greek Philoſophers) expreſſed his Senſe of Self-Murder by a juſt and proper Alluſion, which many of the beſt Writers ſince have adopted, and which is hardly ever left unmentioned on this Subject; for he compared our Situation in Life, to that of a Centinel upon Duty, and from thence obſerved, that *it is unlawful to quit our Poſt without the expreſs leave of* GOD *our Commander.* It is well known too, that SOCRATES and PLATO† (thoſe two Honours of Heathen Philoſophy) de-

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* PYTHAGORAS vetat injuſſu imperatoris, id eſt Dei, de præſidio & ſtatione vitæ decedere.

CICERO *in* Cat. Maj.

† PLAT. *in* Phæd. p. 62. Ed. Serrani. Ἐμὲ δοκεῖ ἡμᾶς τὲς ἀνθρώπες ἐν τῶν κτημάτων τοῖς Θεοῖς εἶναι· Οἰκεῖν, &c. *Man ſeems to be one of thoſe things, in which the Gods have reſerved to themſelves a Property. And therefore, as a Maſter would be angry with his Slave, if he ſhould kill himſelf without his Leave, and would puniſh him (if he could) for ſo doing; ſo it is reaſonable to think, that no Man ought to kill himſelf, unleſs* GOD *lays him under a Neceſſity of killing himſelf, as he now does me.* Theſe are SOCRATES's Words, juſt before he drank the Poiſon, by which he was publickly condemned to die at *Athens.*

clared

clared themſelves in expreſs and ſtrong Terms againſt this Action; and that ARISTOTLE (whoſe juſt Senſe of Things all Ages have admired) has gone much farther than they, and charged the Self-Murderer with Cowardice in that Act: *He* does not* (ſays he) *embrace Death, becauſe it is honourable to him; but he flies from Life, becauſe it is a Burden to him, and he has not the Courage to ſtand it.*

But the greateſt Weight is laid by the Advocates for Self-Murder upon the Practice of the *Romans:* It has been called a *Roman Virtue,* and CATO is placed at the Head of this falſe Heroiſm: and yet it may be truly affirmed, that this Crime was ſcarcely ever more prevailing at *Rome,* than it is at preſent among us; that it was a Faſhion, which (as with us) grew out of the Degeneracy and Corruption of the Times; and that the Laws of that Country† condemned and puniſhed it, as ours

* ARIST. Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 3. c. 7. Τὸ δὲ ἀποθνήσκειν φεύγοντα πενίαν, ἢ ἔρωτα, ἢ τι λυπηρὸν, οὐκ ἀνδρείου, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον δειλοῦ· μαλακία γὰρ τὸ φεύγειν ἐπαγωγα. καὶ ἔχ, ὅτι καλὸν, ὑπομένει, ἀλλὰ φεύγων κακόν.

† TARQUIN (*the* Roman *King*) *ordered that the Self-Murderers ſhould be crucified after their Deaths; and the* Pontifical Books *of the* Romans *provided, that they ſhould be deprived of the Rites of Burial.* See SERVIUS's Note

do: Their beſt Writer and Philoſopher, CICERO, * pronounces it abſolutely unlawful; and it is very remarkable, that their beſt Poet, VIRGIL, † has aſſigned to the Self-Murderer a Place of Torment and Miſery, in his Deſcription of the infernal Regions.

I have mentioned theſe Things, tho' very briefly, that we may ſee how the Wiſdom of former Ages *condemns* inſtead of *favouring* (as ſome ſuppoſe) this ſad Practice; and that we may not, through a juſt Admiration of the Virtues of the ancient *Romans*, be ſo far dazzled, as to copy from thoſe Parts of their Behaviour which they themſelves commonly eſteemed

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Note on VIRGIL's Æn. XII. 603. *To which may be added what* CICERO *ſays in* Tuſc. Diſput. 1. 30. Non tamen vincula carceris ruperit; leges enim vetant.

* CIC. *Somn. Scip.* Niſi Deus iſtis te corporis cuſtodiis liberaverit, huc tibi aditus patere non poteſt: homines enim ſunt hâc lege generati—& piis omnibus retinendus eſt animus in cuſtodiâ corporis: nec injuſſu ejus, à quo ille eſt nobis datus, ex hominum vitâ migrandum eſt; ne munus humanum aſſignatum à Deo defugiſſe videamini. TUSCUL. *Diſput.* 1. 30. Vetat dominans ille in nobis Deus injuſſu hinc nos demigrare.

† Proxima deinde tenent mœſti loca, qui ſibi letum
Inſontes peperere manu, lucemq; peroſi
Projecere animam: Quàm vellent æthere in alto
Nunc & pauperiem, & duros perferre labores!
VIRG. *Æn. l.*

Vice

Vices. What ſome few did, ſhould not influence us ſo much, as what the Generality thought; eſpecially when it is conſidered, that thoſe who made the Laws, or wrote againſt Self-Murder, are more likely to have proceeded by pure and unbiaſſed Reaſon, in their Judgment upon the Caſe, than thoſe did, who were driven by the Evils of Life, againſt the Bent and Paſſion of Nature, to become their own Executioners.

But let us come to the Argument offered in the Text, *viz.* that it is our Duty as well to *receive Evil as Good at the hand of* God: The Argument (as you may perceive) is taken from our being abſolutely under the Dominion and Diſpoſal of God, as our Creator, Preſerver, and Governor: and to ſhew the Force of it, as directed againſt Self-Murder, the following Propoſitions may deſerve to be conſidered, as depending on each other, and amounting (I think) to a full Proof of the Point in queſtion.

(1.) If God gave us Life, it is certain that he gave it us for ſome End and Purpoſe; for to ſuppoſe that a Being, infinitely Wiſe and Good, has in any Inſtance acted without an End and Purpoſe, is to ſuppoſe a viſible Abſurdity: Now the Ends, which God had in view, when he

gave us Life, could have been no other than one or both of these two, the promoting of his own Glory and Service, or of our true and real Happiness.

(2.) While therefore these Ends last and subsist, no Man can justly presume upon God's Leave to depart out of Life, by his own Hands, because no Man, tho' in the most afflicted Condition, is incapable of answering one or both these Ends of Life.

For (to speak with regard to the first) if God's Glory and Service be promoted by the Practice of every Virtue; and if Patience and Submission to the Divine Will be Virtues; and if they are chiefly exercised in a State of Adversity; and if the greater the Adversity is, the more conspicuous these Virtues appear; does it not follow very plainly from hence, That the most afflicted Man is capable of advancing the Honour and Interests of his Maker?

Or if we consider the other End, for which Life may be supposed to have been given us, I mean the promoting of our own true and real Happiness; let us at the same time but allow, that we have a Being which is to exist in some future State of Recompence; and then natural Reason will tell us, that since Patience and

Submission

Submiſſion to the Will of God under Calamities are Virtues, and ſince God is Juſt and Good, (as he muſt neceſſarily be), he cannot fail to reward theſe Virtues, either in the preſent World, (as he did in Job's Caſe) or in the next World, which is to be conſidered even now as part of our Portion and Inheritance. So that from this Reflection we may conclude, that even in the moſt miſerable Condition of Man, this End of Life ſubſiſts: by the Practice of theſe Virtues, which are diſplayed only in a State of Affliction, he can purſue his trueſt, *i. e.* his moſt laſting Happineſs; he can make his patient Endurance of Evils here, the Means of his being eternally rewarded hereafter. And upon the Face of this whole Argument it will appear, that no Man, whatſoever his Condition be, can have a Right to throw away that Life which God has given him, becauſe he can never be incapable of anſwering both thoſe Ends, for which the Gift was beſtowed.

(3.) Again, tho' God ſhould not have given us Life, for any ſuch Ends and Purpoſes as theſe; or tho' in ſome Caſes, we may be ſuppoſed wholly incapable of ſerving any Ends which God ſeems to have had in view; yet it muſt be always remembered, that God has an abſolute

Property in our Lives: and therefore without an expreſs Declaration of his Will we ought never to preſume upon having this Conſent to depart out of Life, by our own Hands, and at our own Pleaſure.

Thoſe, who knew moſt of the Human Fabric, and have made the niceſt Searches into it, have diſcovered great Reaſon to conclude, that we do not ſubſiſt in Life by any known Powers of Mechaniſm, by any fixed and ſettled Laws of Nature; but rather, that every Moment's Continuance of our Lives depends upon an immediate Act of God's Power, upon an Exertion of an actual Providence, without which the bodily Frame of Man would ſoon fall to pieces, and the operating Powers would be at a ſtand and deſtitute of all Motion. Now, if this be the caſe, (as it ſeems plainly enough to be) then it may be aſked, Whether there can be at any time a ſtronger and fuller Declaration of God's Will that we ſhould go on to live, than that he goes on to furniſh us with Life? Muſt not a Man in this view of the Matter, be thought a perverſe Reaſoner, who, while he finds God actually continuing Life to him, can preſume upon his Permiſſion to put an End to it by Violence? Are not the Parts, which God and he take at ſuch a time, directly contrary? And

does

does not the Self-Murderer act in plain oppoſition to the Will of God, which he feels (as it were) within him?

But if we conſider Life in the more common, but leſs accurate way of conſidering it, I mean, as given to us at firſt, and once for all by the divine Author of it; yet ſtill we may ſee great Reaſon to look upon Self-Murder as an unjuſt Uſe of the Gift: for it can never be ſuppoſed by any reaſonable Man, that when God gave him the *Uſe* of Life, he intended to give away his own Right of *Dominion* and *Property* in it: Does it not follow then from hence, that a Right in us to *uſe* our Lives cannot include a Right to *deſtroy* them; becauſe that puts an End to God's Right of Dominion and Property over them? We know, that when any Thing ceaſes to be, all Intereſt and Property in it ceaſes; whence then comes any Man's Right to do an act thus injurious to his Creator? One thing we are ſure of, and there is nothing more clear from the Principles of Morality than it is, *viz.* that the ſtrongeſt Right of *Uſe* cannot be lawfully exerciſed, when it injures another Perſon in his ſuperior Right of *Dominion* and *Property*.

It has been ſaid indeed, by the Advocates of Self-Murder, that unleſs Men are

poſſeſſed of ſuch a full and complete Right over their Lives, no Magiſtrate in a Society could have the Power of Life and Death over the Subjects; becauſe (as they ſay) this Power of the Magiſtrate ariſes from Men's having transferred to Him the Right which they have over their own Lives. But however plauſible this Argument may appear, it is in Truth founded wholly upon a miſtaken Principle; for the Magiſtrate's Right over the Lives of Subjects ariſes from a very different Cauſe: It owes its being not to any Right which Men naturally have over their own Lives, and which they have agreed to convey to Him: but (if it was not given to Him by God) it ariſes rather from a Conveyance of that Right, which every Man has over the Life of him, who, in a State of Nature, would have forfeited it to him by his injurious Behaviour. This is the true Source of that Power of Life and Death, which the Magiſtrate is juſtly poſſeſſed of; and when once a Society is formed, this Right enlarges itſelf, and extends as far as the Ends of good Government neceſſarily require.

Life therefore being the Property of God, and Man having only a Right of Uſe in it, we may conclude from hence, that in this View it is abſolutely unlawful for

for any Man, though under Calamities, to make such a *Use* of Life, as to destroy and put an End to God's Right of *Property* in it.

Thus far I have proceeded in my Reasonings upon the Argument which the Text offers; but there is another Reflection, which is suggested upon this Subject by the Story of the Speaker in the Text: For,

(4.) If all the abovementioned Propositions were not clearly true; nay, if they were evidently false, yet the Generality of Self-Murderers act as irrational a Part as can well be imagined:

For, if those Calamities (which are the usual Temptations to this Crime, such as Pain, Poverty, Infamy, Disappointments, and the like) be only apprehended as coming upon us, is it not Wisdom to consider, that possibly they may never approach nearer; or they may be less severe, when they reach us, than they seem to be at a Distance; or we ourselves may have more Patience and Courage to bear them, than we expected? Of every one of these Particulars there are frequent Instances; and Experience shews us, that things are often found to be very different from what they appear to be: No Man knows the Strength of his Mind, any more than the Strength

Strength of his Body, till he has tried it; and the Supports furniſhed by Religion, Reaſon, and Example of others, are able to bear all the dead Weight of the worſt Diſtreſſes and Calamities.

But if we ſuppoſe that theſe Evils are not *apprehended* only, but actually *come* home to us, and *felt* upon our Shoulders, yet why ſhould we think that they are likely to be more ſettled and laſting than the contrary Bleſſings are, of Health, Riches, and Reputation? Is there any Condition of Life which is not ſubject to Accidents? Are not the *Evils* of it under the ſame State of Variableneſs as the *Good* Things of it? A Change therefore may come, and then it will be a delightful one, like the ſafe Landing after a violent Storm; the more welcome for what has paſſed. Thus, we know, it fared with Job, whoſe Hiſtory leaves him a much happier Man than it found him.

However, if no Change of our Calamities ſhould happen, yet what is there almoſt that Experience and Habit does not make more eaſy, by making it more familiar to us? The moſt afflicted Man, by the Benefit of Time, can look round about him, and conſider what Comforts he has to put in the Balance againſt his Evils: He has room to reflect, that there is no one Cala-

mity

mity which ſets any Man at Enmity with his Life, but what ſome other Man has made a ſhift to endure, if not to be tolerably eaſy under, by giving his Thoughts ſome Diverſion, and thus wearing off (as it were) the Edge of his Afflictions. And to this perhaps it is owing that, among the Writers in defence of *Self-Murder*, ſcarcely One ever put his fatal Doctrine in practice: They were wiſer than their Rules, and ſeem to have ſhrewdly ſuſpected that their Swords were ſurer than their Reaſons: Their Behaviour therefore ſhould convince us more than their Arguments; Nature within them ſpake the Truth, while their Pens were employed in aſſerting a Falſehood.

Now from what has been ſaid, we may ſee that the *Self-Murderer* generally acts againſt all the Rules of Reaſon and Senſe, as well as againſt thoſe of Duty and Obligation: For while there is a Proſpect of *untying* the Knot of his Calamities, he raſhly chooſes to *cut* it: While there is a Poſſibility that the preſent Evil may paſs away, he flies to another Evil, that has no poſſible Remedy. He betakes himſelf to a deſperate Refuge, ſuch as that Seaman's is, who, when his Ship is on Fire, leaps into the main Ocean: It is the leaſt calamitous Thing which his confuſed Thoughts then

then preſent to him: He goes to it as to no other than to a new ſort of Miſery; which becauſe he has not tried, he hopes may be more tolerable, tho' he knows that it is irreparable. So that upon the Principles of common Prudence a Man ought not, while there is any Shadow of Hope left, (and it is hardly ever ſeen that there is none left) to make an abſolute Diſpoſal of himſelf, by violently breaking the Thread of Life.

But above all things it ought to be well and ſeriouſly conſidered, that in this Action (if it takes effect immediately, as it commonly does, and always is deſign'd to do) there is no room for ſecond Thoughts and for After-wiſdom; and therefore if it be a Sin, it entirely excludes all place of Repentance. So that before any Man ventures upon ſuch a deſperate Crime as This, he ſhould not only be without any one ſingle Suſpicion of its Unlawfulneſs, but he ought to be demonſtrably aſſured of its Lawfulneſs. If there be any good Proof, or but the Appearance of one; nay, if there be but any Ground of Doubt, or even a bare Poſſibility of its being a Crime, he riſks too much when he runs any Hazard of his eternal Welfare in the blind Enterprize. So that for a Man to talk of flying to Death,

as

s to a *Port* and *Harbour* of Safety from he Evils which he meets with, is one of he moſt unaccountable Follies in Nature: For ſuch an one leaps out of a Leſſer into Greater Evil, out of a Natural into a Moral one; with this Aggravation of his ll Choice, that the firſt may have a Remedy, whereas the latter cannot poſſibly ave any.

Theſe, and the like Reflections, may e of uſe to arm all of us, and to enable s to arm others, againſt the Arguments f ſuch as ſet up for Advocates of Self-Murder: and endeavour to deceive Men o their Ruin, by the Plauſibleneſs of heir Reaſonings, and the ſeeming Greatneſs of their Sentiments; as when they ell us that, under all the Evils of Life, * *Death is the Remedy which Nature has indly put into our Hands*; that we have † *he Keys of our Priſon in our own Hands*, nd that ‖ *on the Point of a Sword, or at he Bottom of a River, there is always Liberty to be found.* But how much nobler vas that Sentiment of the ſame Heathen, who ſpeaking of a good Man combating

* Philoſoph. Diſſertation upon Death, *p.* 94.
† *Preface to* Dr. Donne's Biathanatos.
‖ Seneca de Irâ, *L.* 3. § 15.

with

with Misfortunes, and a Match for them, says * *it is a Sight which* God *himself might look down upon with Pleasure?* And we find in the Beginning of the Chapter from whence the Text is taken, that God is represented there as triumphing (as it were) in the Constancy of Job, and making his Patience under Afflictions a Part of his own Honour; for thus he says to Satan, *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright Man?*

There are no Virtues perhaps more perfect than such as are display'd in the patient enduring of Calamities: As Gold and Silver are purified by the Refiner's Fire, so are These by the Furnace of Affliction. And perhaps the truest kind of Courage is that which is exerted in bearing Misfortunes: Its Principle is more *within* the Man, than in any other Case; and therefore he that can face Misery is a Hero indeed. But however that be, there is nothing more rational in us as Men, than to take our Share in all the Disposals of Providence, and to *dare* to undergo whatever Condition of Life is assigned us. But to a Christian, the Du-

* Sen. de Providentiâ, §. 2.

of Patience under Afflictions is much stronger: To take up our Cross of Evils, when we are called to it, is what we are taught not only by the Doctrine, but by the Example of our blessed Saviour. He came into a World, where he was a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*, and where he constantly *endured the Contradiction of Sinners*. A great part of his History is made up of his Sufferings, and his Life is one great Pattern of Submission to the Will of GOD, under the whole Weight of Misery. He has taught us by himself and his Apostles, that nothing is a real Evil but *Sin*; that the *Afflictions of this World are light, and but for a Moment*; that GOD's *Grace is sufficient for us*; and that *he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able*, if we use our best Endeavours, and pray aright for his heavenly Assistance.

And all of us have great Occasion seriously and frequently to consider the heinous Nature of Self-Murder, while we are yet unmolested and untempted by the Evils of Life; for the only way to make the Rules about it of force to us, when we are miserable, is to imprint them deep in our Memories, while we are happy. And the peculiar Importance of right Notions in this part of our Duty, for which (if we transgress

tranſgreſs it) there is no Remedy, ſhou
make us deſirous and earneſt to rivet the
in us, that if ever the Evil Day ſhou
overtake us, we may bring ourſelves to
down with JOB, and ſay, *What, ſhall*
receive Good at the hand of GOD, *and ſha*
we not receive Evil? And if ever Afflictio
ſhould be the Portion of any of You, ma
GOD give you the Patience of JOB unde
it, and reward your Patience, as he di
his; of whom it is ſaid, that GOD *bleſſ*
his latter End, more than his Beginning.



FINIS.

8.

DMONITIONS

AGAINST

SWEARING,

SABBATH-BREAKING,

AND

DRUNKENNESS,

ſigned for the Benefit of ſuch, as are guilty of *one* or *more* of theſe Vices.

JAMES STONHOUSE, M. D.
Rector of GREAT and LITTLE CHEVEREL, Wiltſhire.

ſhalt in any Wiſe rebuke *thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer Sin on him.* LEVIT. xix. 17.

that being often reproved, *hardeneth his Neck, ſhall ſuddenly* deſtroyed, *and that without Remedy.* PROV. xxix. 1.

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1800.

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monitions have been printed
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MOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

DMONITIONS

AGAINST

wearing, Sabbath-breaking, and Drunkenneſs.

Admonitions againſt Swearing.

NEIGHBOUR,

THE Profanation of God's holy Name, *by curſing and ſwearing*, to which you annot but be ſenſible that you are addicted, a moſt heinous Sin.—There are none ſo norant, as not to know, that it is a Breach the *third* Commandment, "*Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold* Him *guiltleſs who taketh his Name in* vain." *xod.* xx. 7. Our Saviour has expreſsly rbid it in our common Converſation, Swear not at all," *Matt.* v. 34. And ſo kewiſe has the Apoſtle St. James in theſe ords, "Above all Things, my Brethren, *ſwear not*, leſt you fall into Condemnation," *James* v. 12. There is likewiſe awful Threatening againſt *Swearers* in e Prophet Zechariah, where it is ſaid, That the *Curſe*, which goeth over the whole Earth againſt Wickedneſs, ſhall cut them off," *Zech.* v. 3.

Conſider further, that, beſides being thus rbidden and threatened in the Word of od, *Swearing* is a notorious Breach of

Civility and good Manners. He who liv
in the Fear of God, is ſo far from *Curſ*
and *Swearing*, that it greatly ſhoc
grieves and affronts Him to hear *oth*
thus offending. There is *no Excuſe* to
made for it. It has neither Honour, Pl
ſure, nor Profit attending it.—There is
Temptation to it.—Neither can you
your *Conſtitution* inclines you to *ſwear*: It
teaching *others*, eſpecially *Children*, t
Language of Hell. We are taught
Chriſt to pray daily, *Hallowed be thy Na*
Angels praiſe it:—*Devils* tremble at it:
and ſhall *Man alone* dare to blaſpheme it
Curſing and Swearing?

This is a *Warning* of too great Impor
ance to be *ſlighted*. Let it convince y
of the Sinfulneſs, Folly, and Danger
vain Swearing. Reflect at the ſame Ti
how long you have lived in this Cour
and for what a dreadful Number of Oat
you have to account. Humble your
in the Sight of God; and earneſtly b
wail the Profaneneſs of your Life. R
pent and believe in the Lord Jeſus Chri
and you may even yet be *ſaved*. But th
remember your *Faith* and *Repentance* c
not be ſincere, till you firmly *reſolve*, by
Grace of God, that from henceforth "yo
"Converſation ſhall be ſuch, as becom
"

the Goſpel of Chriſt." *Phil.* i. 27.—
nd in order to avoid this Sin for the fu-
re, let me earneſtly beſeech you, as a ſin-
re Friend to your *Soul*, to guard againſt
at *Paſſion*, by which you are provoked to
ear, and blaſpheme the God of Heaven.
-The *Swearer* is trifling in the groſſeſt
anner with the moſt tremendous of all
ings.—Remember the Apoſtle's Warn-
g, *Be not deceived: God is not mocked.*
al. vi. 7. Conſider how dreadful would
your State, if God, when thus provoked
d defied, ſhould inflict on you *that Dam-*
tion, which you ſo unnaturally wiſh for
urſelves, or wantonly and cruelly impre-
te on others; and ſo "*your own Tongue*
fall on you," Pſalm lxiv. 8.

Let me intreat you alſo not to allow your-
f in a wicked Habit of bringing in the
cred Names of *God*, *Jeſus*, and *Chriſt*,
expreſs your *Wonder*, or confirm your
romiſes, or *Purpoſes*, in the moſt ſlight and
vial Matters. It is in vain to hope, that
ur *Mind* will preſerve a ſerious Regard to
d, and to *Chriſt*, if your *Tongue* be al-
wed a common, and irreverential Uſe of
oſe ſacred Names, in Contempt of the
thority of God, of our bleſſed Saviour,
d his Apoſtles.—Pray to God daily for
Mercy, Pardon, and Aſſiſtance. *Avoid*

the Company of the *Profane*, leſt you agai
" learn (their *Language* and) their *Way*
" and get a Snare to your Soul," *Prov*
xxii. 25.—Take this Admonition kindly, a
it is kindly meant; and conſider it, as com
ing from one who has a ſincere Deſire to d
you Good, and a real Concern, as his Fello
Creature, for your Credit in *this* World, an
your Happineſs in the *next*.

Admonition againſt Sabbath-breaking

NEIGHBOUR,

THE Profanation of the *Lord's Day*, o
Chriſtian Sabbath, is become ſo ſham
fully common among *all* Ranks and Orde
of Men, that it is the Duty *of every on*
who wiſhes well to his Fellow-Chriſtians,
the riſing Generation, and to our Country
to do *all* in his power to *awaken*, and *refo*
thoſe who are chargeable with it.

Let me therefore remind you, that—
the *Creation* God appointed *one* Day in
ven to be kept *holy* for Religious Purpoſ
—that he has required this in the *Law*
Moſes, particularly in the *fourth* Comma
ment:—and that it is required likewiſe
Effect by *Jeſus Chriſt*.—The *Lord's D*
ſo called in Remembrance of his Reſurr
th

ion on that Day, was kept *holy* by the Apoſtles, and firſt Chriſtians, and in *all* Chriſtian Nations ever ſince. It is therefore moſt evidently *the Duty* of every Chriſtian to obſerve it, as a *Day of Reſt* from Work, Buying, Selling, Travelling, except in Caſes of great and unavoidable Neceſſity: and from all Kinds of Sport and Diverſions: And He is to employ this Day in attending at Church both Morning and Afternoon—in reading the Bible and good Books at Home—in inſtructing his Family—in ſerious Reflections on the Duties he is to diſcharge;—on the Temptations, to which, through the following Weeks and future Life, he may be expoſed;—on what is likely to be his Doom and State through Eternity:—And in earneſt Prayers to GOD for Pardon, Aſſiſtance, Strength, and eternal Life, through the Merits and Mediation of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

To ſpend the ſacred Time in Amuſement, and Idleneſs, or in frequenting Coffee-houſes, Taverns, or Ale-houſes, and to neglect the *public* and *private* Duties of the Day, is an high Affront to the *Authority* of GOD, a baſe, ungrateful Return for the Love and Grace of our Saviour—an unſpeakable Injury to Yourſelf, to your Family, and to the Nation. It expoſes you

to

to the Penalties which *our Laws* inflict on Sabbath-breakers: and tends to bring the Judgments of GOD on our Country. It leads you to bad Company, to an Habit of Idleneſs, Drunkenneſs, Extravagance, and ſo to Ruin; as many have acknowledged, who have ſuffered at the Place of Execution. It finally tends to deſtroy all ſerious Thought and religious Concern, to harden the Heart, and ſo expoſes you to *everlaſting* Deſtruction.

You are therefore, by *all* theſe Arguments, earneſtly intreated to conſider your *Duty* and *Intereſt*; immediately to leave off this pernicious Practice of *Sabbath-breaking*, and apply yourſelves vigorouſly to the *proper Duties* of that holy Day. It is particularly deſired, that, the next Time you go to Church, you would conſider the *Reſponſe*, which you make after the Miniſter hath read the *fourth* Commandment; and that it will be baſe Hypocriſy, and an horrid Inſult on the Heart-ſearching GOD, to *beſeech* him to *incline your Heart to keep that Law*, unleſs you are ſincerely and fully *reſolved* to keep it.—The *Sabbath*, comfortable Reflection! was deſigned as a Day of *Bleſſing*: may you never more by your Idleneſs, Profaneneſs, or any other Cauſe, turn that *Bleſſing* into a *Curſe*.—

For

For *Death* will ſoon cloſe (for ever cloſe) the Day of Grace and Mercy. And, if you now neglect, eſpecially after this *faithful Warning*, "the Things which make for "your Peace, they will *then* be hid from "your Eyes:" *Luke* xix. 42. you will *then* find no Place for *Repentance*.

Admonition againſt Drunkenneſs.

NEIGHBOUR,

DRUNKENNESS is a Vice which deſtroys your Health, waſtes your Time and Money, and ſo injures your Family: It robs you likewiſe of your good Name, brings a Reproach on that holy Religion you profeſs, and is not conſiſtent with a due Uſe of your Reaſon: Nay, (which is far more dreadful than any of theſe Conſiderations) it will certainly exclude you *for ever* from the Kingdom of Heaven. This you will ſee in holy Scripture, by the following Texts. *Be not deceived: neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor* Drunkards, *nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. —*And be not* drunk *with Wine, wherein is Exceſs; but be filled with the Spirit*, Eph. v. 18.—*Let us walk honeſtly as in the Day, not*

not in Rioting *and* Drunkenneſs, *not in Chambering and Wantonneſs, not in Strife and Envying*, Rom. xiii. 13. *They who are guilty of Envyings, Murders*, Drunkenneſs, *Revellings, and ſuch like, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 21.—*Take heed to yourſelves, leſt at any Time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and* Drunkenneſs, *and Cares of this Life, and ſo that Day come upon you unawares*, Luke xxi. 34.—*Woe unto them, that riſe up early in the Morning, that they may follow ſtrong* Drink, *that continue until Night, till Wine inflame them. And the Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe, and Wine are in their Feaſts; but they regard not the Work of the Lord, neither conſider the Operation of his Hands*, Iſa. v. 11, 12.—*Woe unto them that are mighty to drink Wine; and Men of Strength to mingle ſtrong Drink*, Iſa. v. 22.—*Woe unto Him who giveth his Neighbour Drink; who putteth the Bottle to him, and maketh him* drunken *alſo, that he may look on his Nakedneſs*, Hab. ii. 15. that is, get out the Secrets of his Heart, or expoſe him to Ridicule. It is a *ſcriptural* Injunction to offer friendly Reproof to an offending Brother, namely, *Thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer Sin upon him.* Levit. xix. 17. It is therefore out of *Love* to your Soul, that you are thus

reminded

reminded of the *Sinfulneſs* of exceſſive *Drinking*, and *warned* to forbear, as ever you hope to eſcape eternal Miſery; for St. *Paul* expreſsly affirms, that *Drunkards ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 10. Think a little on this plain Queſtion, *Are you going towards Heaven or Hell?* To which of theſe two will *Drunkenneſs* lead?

By all theſe *Conſiderations* you are moſt earneſtly intreated to *examine* into the State of your *Soul*; and, for the Time to come, conſcientiouſly to avoid both the *Drink*, the *Company*, and the *Occaſion*, which would tempt, or lead you to *this Vice*: For aſſure yourſelf, if you either deſpiſe, or will not make a timely and proper *Uſe* of what has been ſaid to *preſerve* you from this Vice; if you will not *pray*, and *ſtrive* againſt it, and avoid *all Temptations* to it, this very *Admonition*, which you now read, will both accuſe and condemn you at the Judgment-Seat of *Chriſt*. As therefore you value your immortal *Soul*, apply to this Judge now: Make him your Friend, by *believing* in Him and *obeying* Him, which is the *only* Way to be ſaved. Repent of your Sins. Hearken to this *well intended* Admonition: Receive it *thankfully*; and for GOD's Sake, your Family's Sake, and your own, let it have its due *Effect* on your Life and Practice for the future.

THE END.

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9.

A DISSUASIVE FROM STEALING.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

HOLTON, in SUFFOLK.

INSCRIBED TO THE

SOCIETY for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

By STEPHEN WHITE, M.A.

RECTOR OF HOLTON.

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Ephes. IV. 28.

Let him that ſtole, ſteal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the Thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

THE Apoſtle, in this Chapter, exhorts the *Epheſians* to forſake their former Converſation, which they had paſſed their Lives in, while they were in their Heathen State: And in a particular Manner preſſes them to the ſtrict Obſervance of ſeveral of the great ſocial Virtues; whereof *Juſtice*, in Oppoſition to *Stealing*, is one; *Honeſt Induſtry*, a ſecond; and *Almſgiving*, a third; which he here recommends, even to Perſons in mean Circumſtances. *Let him that ſtole*, ſays he, before his Converſion, now that he is become a Chriſtian, *ſteal no more*; *but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the Thing which is good*; *that he may have*, not only what is ſufficient for himſelf, but ſomewhat alſo *to give to him that needeth.*

My Deſign in this Diſcourſe will in a great Meaſure confine me to the firſt of theſe, *viz.* The Prohibition of Theft. To enforce which, I ſhall lay before you ſeveral Conſiderations, though the firſt I ſhall offer ought to be ſufficient, which is, the *Authority of God himſelf*; who has given us a poſitive Commandment, and delivered it Himſelf, with great Solemnity; ſaying, THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.

God who made all Things, is the great Proprietor of the World, and all Things therein; and under certain Limitations, He has transferred this Right to Man, and *made him have Dominion over the Works of his Hands.* Had Man continued in a *State of Innocence* and every one been reaſonable in his Deſires, and well ſatisfied with what was ſufficient to make him happy; he might have enjoyed in *common*, and without Labour and Sorrow, the plentiful Proviſion which God hath made; and the Earth, of its own Accord, produced for him: But after Man had ſinned, and the Ground was curſed for his Sake, and he was doomed *in the Sweat of his Face to eat Bread*, and when *Men began to multiply on the Earth*; then Covetouſneſs, Fraud, and Violence, were introduced into the World; and it became neceſſary to divide into diſtinct Rights and Properties, thoſe Things which before were in common: And this Diviſion being once made, it was fit, that every one ſhould be content with his *own Lot*, and not invade the Right and Property of others. And this is ſo apparently juſt and reaſonable, that the righteous Judge of the World, and Lord of all Things, has fenced Mens Properties by a Law written in our Hearts.

For even before this Law of God was publiſhed, Mankind was ſufficiently ſenſible of the great Guilt of Stealing. When *Joſeph* out of Policy to ſtay his Brethren, had cauſed them to be accuſed of ſtealing his Cup; they diſclaim

diſclaimed the Charge with the greateſt Vehemence, and acknowledged this Crime to be worthy of Death: *God forbid that thy Servants ſhould do according to this Thing: with whomſoever it be found, let him die*, Gen. xliv. 7, 9.

Under the *Jewiſh* Law, it was ordered by God himſelf, in many Caſes, that *if a Thief be found breaking up, and be ſmitten that he die, no Blood* ſhould *be ſhed for him*: His Life ſhould be accounted juſtly forfeited by his Crime. The Prophet *Jeremiah* ranks this with the blackeſt Crimes; and, in the Name of the Lord, ſeverely reproaches thoſe, who, with ſo much Guilt upon their Souls, preſume to make their Appearance in the Houſe of God, Chap. vii. 9. *Will ye ſteal, murder, and commit Adultery, and ſwear falſely, and yet come and ſtand before me in this Houſe, which is called by my Name? Is this Houſe which is called by my Name, become a Den of Robbers in your Eyes?* Is it fit, think you, that they who are ſo unjuſt to their Neighbour, ſhould at the ſame Time pretend to worſhip God? *What haſt thou to do*, ſaith God to the wicked Man in the 50th Pſalm, *to declare my Statutes, or take my Covenant in thy Mouth? When thou ſaweſt a Thief, thou conſentedſt unto him*; by which, I ſuppoſe, is meant the *Aiding* or *Abetting* a Thief; which is too frequently done by *receiving* and *concealing* his *ſtolen Goods*. And this, let it be obſerved, is one of the Crimes, for which the wicked Man here is, in a ſolemn Manner, declared by God, to be unworthy *to*

take his Covenant in his Mouth, i. e. unworthy to read the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures.

And if the Sin we are ſpeaking of be ſo ſeverely cenſured and puniſhed, under the imperfect Diſpenſation of the Law of *Moſes*; it is, we may be ſure, much more inconſiſtent with the Duty of a Chriſtian. We are bound by the ſtrongeſt Endearments, to *do Good* to one another: What then will become of us, if, inſtead of diſtributing what is our *own*, we invade the Property of *others*? The Duties of *Charity* and *Beneficence* are indiſpenſably required at our Hands: How then ſhall we eſcape, if we violate the plaineſt Laws of *common Juſtice*? And if the Man who is true and juſt in all his Dealings, for want of Charity, or a charitable Diſpoſition, ſhall not be ſaved, where ſhall the *Thief* and the *Robber* appear? And, therefore, we find that Theft has a conſtant Place in the black Catalogue of Vices, which, our Saviour has told us, *defile the Man*; make him unclean and hateful in the Sight of God;-and which, according to St. *Paul*, exclude Men from *the Kingdom of Heaven*.

II. Or if theſe Men will not hearken to the Commands of God, yet if they will but, *ſecondly*, conſent to be governed by the *plaineſt Reaſon*, if they will but conſult their own *depraved Reaſon*, (for I will venture to appeal to the Reaſon of the moſt infamous among themſelves,) and this will ſhew them the Wickedneſs of their Doings. For can they bear, that any of thoſe Things ſhould be taken from *them*, by Fraud or Violence, which they by

by the ſame Means, have taken away from the rightful Owners? With what Rage and Fury will they fly in the Face of their Aſſociates, if they go about to deprive them of their Share in the unrighteous Plunder?—Now, if in their own Opinion, it be ſo baſe, and ſo provoking, *to rob a Thief* of what he has no Title to; how much baſer, and wickeder, muſt the Thief himſelf appear, in the Sight of God and Man, who often robs *the honeſt and induſtrious*, of what, by the Laws of God and Man, he has a Right to enjoy?

Beſides, theſe Men know too well that even a Gang of Thieves cannot carry on their wicked Purpoſes together, without being true and juſt to one another: No more can any Society of Men ſubſiſt, unleſs the Rules of Juſtice and Honeſty be obſerved, and Mens Properties ſecured from all unjuſt Invaſions. So that the natural Tendency of Theft is to ſubvert all Government; diſſolve the Bands of Society; and turn the good Order of the World into a lawleſs State of Rapine and Violence. Now thoſe Perſons are widely miſtaken, if there be any ſo weak as to imagine, that even the loweſt of the People would find their Account in ſuch a State of Things. They who have nothing to loſe, might be Gainers for a while, by the common Plunder; but would ſoon perceive themſelves unable to keep and enjoy it: On the Contrary, they would find themſelves deprived of that Maintenance and Protection, which, by the Laws of their Country, and the Charity of well-diſpoſed

People, are now afforded them: and in ſhort, that the Small and the Great would by this Means be involved in equal Ruin and Confuſion.

But ſince we have little Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that they who are addicted to ſuch a ſcandalous Vice as Stealing, can be influenced by a Senſe of Religion, or the Fear of God; or even the Dictates of Reaſon: I ſhall proceed to *Conſiderations of another Nature*, as more ſuitable to the Perſons to whom this Diſcourſe is directed. Let thoſe, therefore, who allow themſelves in this infamous Practice, conſider,

III. What *uneaſy Apprehenſions* they continually live under of *being diſcovered*. They know that Men are very vigilant and careful, in ſecuring their worldly Poſſeſſions: That they keep a ſtrict Watch over all ſuch Perſons, whoſe Character, and Manner of Living, do not place them above Suſpicion. And beſides this, they are, in many Caſes, under conſtant *Fears*, and juſt Reaſon they have to be afraid, of being betrayed by their *Accomplices*; for they, whoſe Conſciences will allow them to rob an innocent Perſon, will hardly ſcruple to diſcover a thieviſh Companion, whenever they can ſave themſelves harmleſs, or perhaps be rewarded for ſo doing. Or, ſuppoſe the natural Deceitfulneſs of ſuch Perſons does not extend to their *Aſſociates*; ſuppoſe they will be *faithful* to their *wicked Partners*, while they are *falſe* to all the World beſides; which is indeed too often the Caſe; yet, whenever any of theſe Perſons are brought to a Senſe of their Guilt, and to repent of their Sins; they

will find themſelves obliged, nay, if they are truly penitent, they will be ready and deſirous to diſcover their own, and their Companions' Wickedneſs, in order to do Juſtice to thoſe whom they have defrauded, and to ſecure them from future Injuries; which is the beſt Method they can take, to obtain Forgiveneſs both of GOD and Man.

But it may be ſaid, that the *pilfering Thief*, who deals in *ſmaller Matters*, has no need of any Aſſociates at all; and therefore, if he can but carry off and conceal his Prize, he may be eaſy and ſecure, as having no one privy to his evil Practices beſides himſelf. *Eaſy* he cannot be, unleſs he can conceal his Wickedneſs from GOD and his own Conſcience: Neither can he be *ſecure* that he ſhall not *himſelf* diſcover his own Crimes, in Spite of all his Arts; nay, by Means of thoſe very Arts and Endeavours which he uſes to conceal them: He runs, when no Man purſueth; he hides himſelf, before he is ſought after: His Over-forwardneſs in clearing himſelf before he is accuſed, brings him into Suſpicion; and when he finds himſelf ſuſpected, his faltering Speech and Self-contradiction diſcover his Guilt. Or: if ſome few can order their Words ſo artificially, as to tell a great Number of Lies, conſiſtent with one another (which they will find a very difficult Taſk); yet there is ſcarce one in a thouſand, when ſuſpected and examined, who can ſet, what theſe Wretches call, a *good Face* upon the Matter, ſo as to prevent your reading their Crimes in the Confuſion of their

Countenances. So many are the Ways, which God, who ſees through the darkeſt Receſſes of wicked Mens Minds, has appointed, to bring their evil Practices to Light: So difficult is it, to go on long in theſe Ways of Wickedneſs, without being detected; and ſo utterly impoſſible to avoid the continual Fears and Apprehenſions of a Diſcovery; which muſt be ſuch an uneaſy State of Mind as all their unlawful Gains cannot make them Amends for. But let them proceed to conſider,

IV. The *bad Effects* of ſuch Practices, after they are diſcovered: The firſt of which is *Shame*. When a Thief is ſurprized in the Commiſſion of his Wickedneſs, how does he hang down his Head, and let fall his Countenance, as unable to look his injured Neighbour, or any honeſt Man, in the Face. Nay, he muſt be a hardened Sinner indeed, if he can forbear bluſhing to himſelf alone, when a Diſcovery of his evil Deeds forces him to conſider the Meanneſs and Baſeneſs of them; and how odious they render him in the Sight of God, and all good Men. It is no Wonder he chuſes the Night, to cover thoſe Sins from the Notice of Men, which are ſo diſgraceful to human Nature, and makes him reſemble the Wild Beaſts in the Wilderneſs, who ſtroll about in the Night, ſeeking for their Prey. God *makes the Day*, the Pſalmiſt obſerves, *that Man ſhould go forth to his Work and to his Labour, until the Evening*: Then the laborious, honeſt Man, lays him down, and takes his Reſt. *He maketh Darkneſs alſo, that it may be Night,*

Night, wherein all the Beaſts of the Foreſt do move: Then the Thief moves likewiſe, but after a very different Manner; for the Lions, it is ſaid, *roar after their Prey*; they boldly claim it as their own; and ſo it is by the Will of Providence; *they ſeek their Meat from God*; it is the Will of God, that the Creatures he has made ſo ravenous, ſhould be ſuſtained and fed by this Means. But the ſkulking Thief creeps about in fearful Silence; he ſtarts at the ſhaking of a Leaf, and trembles too, as that does; for he knows he is not *ſeeking his Meat from God*, but, by the Inſtigation of the Devil, is robbing his Neighbour of that, which perhaps he had hardly earned, by the Sweat of his Brows. And this muſt needs expoſe him to the utmoſt Shame and Contempt, as ſoon as he is diſcovered.

But the Shame which covers his Face, will not repair the Wrongs he has done to his Neighbour; for there is a ſecond very natural Effect of a Diſcovery, which is *Reſtitution*: He will be obliged to reſtore what he has taken by Stealth, if it be in his Power; and then what Advantage does he reap by ſtealing it?

Neither will this ſatisfy even human Juſtice: there ſtill remains what he moſt of all dreads, and that is, ſuch *corporal Puniſhment* as the Laws of his Country have appointed for his Crimes; to be ſhamefully *ſcourged* in the public Street; to be dragged to a *noiſome Gaol*, as unfit for human Society, and unworthy to breathe in the common Air; to be *branded* with ſome indelible Mark of Infamy. To be

made a *publik Spectacle* of Contempt; and, in ſome Caſes, to be put to a violent and ignominious *Death*, by the Hands of the Executioner. And oh! how dreadful a Thing it is, not only for the wretched Criminal who ſuffers, but for every Spectator who beholds, or even for any of us but to think of, and imagine he beholds a Perſon in perfect Health, and, as it commonly happens, in the Flower of his Age, taking a *ſhameful Farewel* of the World; leaving a certain, though unjuſt *Reproach* to his Children's Children; and hurried away from the Bar of *human Juſtice*, to appear before the *awful Tribunal of Heaven*.

Theſe are the known Fruits which all who follow ſuch wicked Courſes may expect to reap, whenever their Crimes are diſcovered. But ſhould they be for ever concealed from the Notice of Men, yet let them know, what I would more earneſtly entreat them to conſider, in the

Vth Place, That the *Eye of God* is always upon them; they can go no where from his Preſence; Darkneſs cannot cover their Deſigns, nor hide them from his View, nor ſave them from his Vengeance. *His Vengeance*, I know, they are apt to look upon as a Thing at a Diſtance, which will not overtake them, before they come into another World. Alas! how many Ways do theſe Men deceive themſelves! Another World cannot be very far from any of us, but the *Thief* has more Reaſon than moſt others, to look upon it as near at Hand; becauſe, if public Juſtice do not reach him, yet GOD has threatened, by the ſecret De-

ſignation

ſignation of his Providence, to cut ſuch wicked Men off in the Career of their Sins: *He that getteth Riches, and not by Right* (ſays the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. xvii. 11.) *ſhall leave them in the Midſt of his Days.* Beſides, there is a ſecret Curſe denounced againſt them while they continue in this World: *I will bring it forth, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*, (Zechariah v. 4.) *and it ſhall enter into the Houſe of the Thief, and it ſhall remain in the Midſt of his Houſe, and ſhall conſume it, with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof.* Whence we ſee, that this Sin, inſtead of eſtabliſhing a Man's Houſe, and increaſing his Subſtance, brings oftentimes utter Deſtruction on all that belongs to him; nay, and entails a Curſe upon his Poſterity; for it is concerning ſuch Perſons that *Job* ſpeaks, when he tells us, *God layeth up his Iniquity for his Children*, Chap. xxi. 19. A juſt God cannot charge a Man's Children with the Guilt of his Crimes, but He may take from the Children, or not ſuffer them to proſper in the Poſſeſſion of that which the Parent had gotten by diſhoneſt Practices.

But becauſe it is much eaſier to ſtop the *Beginnings of Vice*, than to reclaim a hardened Sinner; therefore, what has been ſaid concerning Theft in general, I deſire may now be applied to the *ſmaller Inſtances of Stealing*; which the Scripture forbids, under the Expreſſion of *Purloining*. And this, by the Way, is particularly forbidden to Servants, *Tit.* ii. 10. *Not purloining, but ſhewing all good Fidelity.* And indeed there is great Occaſion for this Caution,

Caution, becauſe many Servants are apt to think it a ſmall Matter to *make bold*, as they term it, with their Maſter's Goods; eſpecially if they keep them not for their own Uſe, but beſtow them on their Friends and Acquaintance: not conſidering that this is not only a downright *Theft*, but likewiſe a *Breach* of that *Truſt* which is repoſed in them; and therefore a greater Sin, than it would be to ſteal the ſame Things from another Perſon. It muſt grieve the Heart of every good Man, to obſerve, how very early many *Children* contract ſuch a Habit of Stealing, that the meaneſt Trifle cannot eſcape their Fingers. They are liſted into the Service of the Devil, as ſoon almoſt as they are dedicated to GOD in their Baptiſm. Nay, it is very credibly reported, that in ſome Places they are taught, even by their *wicked Parents*, to go through *formal Exerciſes*, by which their little Hands are inſtructed in *Picking* and *Stealing*, with more Care and Pains, than might learn them *to labour truly to get their own Living*. And by being thus brought up in the Practice of this Vice in their tender Years, they come to have no Senſe at all of the *Guilt*, and very little Regard to the *Danger* of it; but conſtantly look upon Thieving as the *Craft*, or *Trade*, they are to live by; and value themſelves not a little when they excel their Companions. Now it would give no ſmall Check to this ſtrange Sort of Pride, if they would hear the Words of a pious Author *: "Thou thinkeſt

* *Whole Duty of Man.*

"thou

" thou haſt been very cunning, when thou " haſt over-reached thy Brother; but God " knows, all the while there is another over- " reaching thee, and cheating Thee of what " is infinitely more precious, even thy Soul. " —So thou, that art gaping to ſwallow up " thy poor Brother, art thyſelf made a Prey " to the great Devourer."

And as for the *Parents* above-mentioned, who, inſtead of training up their Children in the Way wherein they ſhould go, lead them into, and urge them on, in theſe Ways of Wickedneſs. If I could ſuppoſe myſelf to be ſpeaking to any ſuch, methinks I could expoſtulate with them, in ſuch a Manner, as would make them aſhamed of ſuch horrid Wickedneſs: " You muſt not, indeed, pre- " tend to a *rational Love* of your Children, " for that would appear by ſtoring their " Minds with good Diſpoſitions, and pro- " curing for them ſuch Benefits and Bleſ- " ſings, as they would have Reaſon to thank " you for another Day: But you may have ſuch a *Fondneſs* and *Affection* for them, as *natural Inſtinct* produces; and can you bear to think that theſe very Children, whom you now pretend to be ſo dear to you, ſhould be for ever miſerable? Can you bear to think, that You yourſelves ſhall be the Occaſion of their eternal Miſery; not only by bringing them into a wicked World, and leaving them to the Naughtineſs of their own Hearts, which is commonly enough to undo them; but by actually *teaching*, nay,

" *forcing*

" *forcing* them to work Wickedneſs? And if
" theſe Conſiderations are not ſufficient to
" affect You, I would aſk once more, whether
" You can endure the Thought of being your-
" ſelves condemned to endleſs Torments, for
" your *Children's Sins* as well as your *own*? to
" have your own Children to be your *Accuſers*
" at the laſt Day; and perhaps appointed to
" be your *Tormentors* too, for ever and ever?"

But to proceed: In Country Places, where Mens Goods lie expoſed in the open Fields, much Dexterity in Stealing is not required: but here, the Eaſineſs of Theft tempts many to be guilty of it, and the Number of Thieves helps to ſkreen them from Puniſhment, and ſerves too, in *their* Way of Reaſoning, even to juſtify a plain Breach of God's Commandment.

And here again we muſt, with grief of Heart obſerve, many Parents ſending out their innocent Children (they would be innocent, if their Parents would ſuffer them to be ſo) as ſoon as they are able to go abroad, to pick and ſteal what they can find; and ſome thing they *muſt* find, or they are ſure to receive ſuch Stripes at their Return Home, which ought to be laid, an hundred Fold, on the Backs of their *Correctors*.

And now I am upon ſmall Thefts, I will inſtance in one, which is commonly and ſhameleſsly practiſed in theſe Parts; I mean, the ſtealing of *Wood*, or other *Fuel*.

The Perſons who are guilty of this, may perhaps think it hard to be ranked among the common Herd of Thieves; but if Men will

be Thieves, they muſt bear to be called ſo: Let us hear, however, what it is they uſually plead in their own Defence.

And firſt, they tell us, that what they ſteal is of *no great Value*; and was the Labour and Pains they take in getting it be conſidered, it commonly comes dearer to them, than what they purchaſe. It is, I believe, very true, that little or nothing is got by ſuch Practices; and yet a great deal of Miſchief is done to the Perſons who are injured. Now if a Man will do to his Neighbour a conſiderable Injury, without procuring hardly any Advantage to himſelf, ſure the Smallneſs of his Gains can never be pleaded in Excuſe, ſince it is plainly an Aggravation of his Wickedneſs; for the ſmaller the Temptation is to any Sin, the greater, doubtleſs, is the Guilt of it.

Beſides, when ſuch an one comes to die (at which Time, moſt wicked Men are forced to conſider their Ways,) and *computes together* the ſeveral Injuries he has done to others, by ſtealing Things of *little Value*; he will commonly find, that he has done more Miſchief, in the Courſe of his Life, by *frequent Pilfering*, than many others, who have forfeited, and loſt their Lives, by one *ſingle Act of Robbery*. And as the former is ſeldom puniſhed in this World, he has Reaſon to expect a more dreadful Reckoning in the World to come: eſpecially, when it is conſidered, that God does not eſtimate the Guilt of Sin, by the outward Action, or by the Greatneſs or Smallneſs of the Subject-matter of it, but by

the

the Degrees of Evil, which he ſees in the Sinner's Diſpoſition. He who ſo graciouſly accepted the Widow's Mite, on Account of her Inability to give more: He who accepts a willing Mind for a Deed of Charity, will doubtleſs, for the ſame Reaſon, eſteem him a *great Criminal* who ſteals only the *ſmalleſt Things*, if He ſees in him ſuch a *thieviſh Diſpoſition*, that it is only Want of Opportunity, or Want of Courage, which hinders him from ſtealing greater.

We ſeldom find, indeed, that they who once allow themſelves in ſtealing Things of ſmall Value, do long want Courage to proceed to greater. It is the Property of many other Sins, to cloy and weary, and waſte the Strength of the Sinner, and ſo leſſen his Inclination to the Practice of them: whereas, ſuch is the peculiar Deceitfulneſs of *this*, that every Commiſſion of it makes Men bolder, and more enterpriſing in Wickedneſs. They who are now the vileſt Sinners of this Sort, who infeſt our public Roads at Noon-day, and at the Dead of Night break open our Houſes: Thoſe abandoned Wretches, who ſhew themſelves with ſo much Inſolence in our Streets; who murder Men without Warning, that they may come at their Pockets without Reſiſtance: even theſe Men (whom none of you, my Brethren, I am well aſſured, can think of without Horror) did yet begin their Courſe with ſmall Tranſgreſſions. And they who are now venturing upon the Commiſſion of ſmall Thefts, not without Fear and Trembling, know not

where

here they ſhall ſtop; nor whether they ſhall ot be ſo far hardened, as to commit the lackeſt Crimes without any Remorſe at all.

Secondly, Theſe Perſons are very apt to lead, in Excuſe of their Wickedneſs, that *eat Numbers* are guilty of the Theft we are eaking of, as well as they. Partners in Iniity do indeed ſerve to keep one another in ountenance. This leſſens the Shame which elongs to the Sin; emboldens Sinners in their vil Practices, and ſaves them likewiſe, too ften, from the Puniſhment appointed for em in this World. But *Numbers* will not reen them from the *Vengeance of God:* the in is the ſame, in his righteous Judgment, hether *one Man* only, or a *Multitude*, be uilty of it; and his all-ſeeing Eye will find ut, and his powerful Arm will puniſh, *every* inner according to his Works. Some again,

Thirdly, are ſo modeſt, as to plead their *Neceſſity*; what they ſteal is one of the Neceſaries of Life, and they have not wherewithal purchaſe it: I might here aſk theſe Perſons, hether they do not purchaſe* *ſome Things* at are *not needful:* ſome Things that do not tisfy the Cravings of Hunger, but rather creaſe them: Things that waſte much of eir Time, weaken their Nerves, and deprive em of that Strength and Vigour which ould be their Support: And† *ſome Things* gain, which ſerve only to ſupply the former oſs of their *natural* Spirits with *falſe and*

* As Tea, &c. † Spirituous Liquors.

unnatural

unnatural ones. And will they tell us, after they have laid out their Money upon fashionable and pernicious *Luxuries*; that they are forced to steal the *Necessaries* of Life? But let this pass; for I know how tender the Place is I have touched upon: I would willingly heal their Sores, without putting them to Pain; and if I make use of any Expressions that seem to them Harsh and Severe, they proceed not, I can assure them, from a Want of Compassion for the Miseries of those who are really Necessitous; but from a sincere Desire of promoting their truest Interests in this World, and their eternal Salvation in the next. For if I am not very much a Stranger to my own Heart, I have a real and tender Sense of the Hardships and Sufferings of the Poor; yet would have them bear with Patience greater Sufferings than they do, (if it should please God to try their Patience with greater) rather than go about to relieve them by dishonest Practices.

But to return: If this Plea of Necessity would justify their Theft in this Particular, it would justify their stealing any other Thing that is necessary to preserve Life. I grant, that Fuel is necessary to our Subsistence; but it cannot be said to be quite so necessary as our *daily Bread.* Therefore, if Men's Necessities were really such as might excuse them in stealing any Thing, surely it would be more pardonable to steal what we justly call the *Staff of Life*, than any other Thing of equal Value. And yet these Men are sensible enough

of

of the Sinfulneſs of Theft, in this latter Caſe; though they make ſo light of it in the former. But this is eaſy to be accounted for; they have not ſuch *fair Opportunities* of ſtealing the one, as they have of the other; and therefore, are willing enough to acknowledge, the great Wickedneſs of ſtealing what they cannot *eaſily come at*; but would fain perſuade us, that it is hardly any Sin at all, to ſteal ſuch Things as lie more *ready to their Hands*: Not conſidering, that a Man's Property in his Goods is the ſame, whereſoever they are placed: and therefore, ſuppoſing the Things to be equally valuable, and ſuppoſing no Violence is uſed, the Injury done him is the ſame, whether they are taken out of his Houſe, or his Pocket, his Barn, or his Field.

But we have a ſtill plainer Anſwer to this Plea of Neceſſity; which is, that there is a *National Relief* appointed, for all the Wants and Neceſſities of the *helpleſs Poor*; and God forbid that it ſhould be denied them. I would to God, that all who have Abilities, would add their private Benevolence to the public Proviſion, in ſo liberal a Manner, as might render the Lives of every one of them eaſy and comfortable: But I muſt wiſh too, that both public and private Charities were more confined, than they commonly are, to the Honeſt and Induſtrious Poor; and that more Care and Reſolution were ſeen in Pariſh Officers, and all who have Authority, to correct and amend thoſe who are not ſo. They would by this Means be the happy Inſtruments of a general

general Reformation; they would bring down the Bleſſings of Heaven upon this ſinful Nation; and (what they ought in the firſt Place to regard) they would diſcharge the Oath of God, which is bound upon their Conſciences. But the Truth is, it is not uſually the *helpleſs Poor* who are guilty of the Crimes we are ſpeaking of: They are not the Lame, and the Blind; nor the diſconſolate Widow, nor Fatherleſs Children, who commit theſe Diſorders; but they are the *luſty and ſtrong*; ſuch whoſe Circumſtances place them above being relieved by a legal Charity; who would not accept of it, if it was offered; and ſuch commonly, who can find wherewithal to ſupport them, in ſinful and extravagant Vices. Upon all which Accounts, they have not the leaſt Reaſon to imagine, that their *pretended Neceſſities* will excuſe their *real Crimes*.

And indeed it is exceeding plain, that nothing can be ſaid in Excuſe of this wicked Practice. It is a ſcandalous Violation of the Laws of God and Man, and grown to ſuch a Height, that it is Time for us to *cry aloud, and ſhew the People their Tranſgreſſions*: It is Time for every honeſt Man to uſe his utmoſt Endeavours to put ſome Stop to it: not ſo much on Account of what he may ſuffer by it in his worldly Affairs, as out of a Chriſtian Compaſſion to the Souls of Men; of great Numbers of Men, who are ſinning, and making a Mock of Sin; breaking, every Day almoſt, a Divine Commandment: a Commandment, which the great God of Heaven did Himſelf

deliver in Thunderings and Lightnings from Mount *Sinai:* And yet these Men make light of it; and seem, all the while they are transgressing it, to say with *Solomon*'s Madman, *Am not I in sport?*

It is a just Sense of the terrible Dangers, to which these unhappy Men expose their Souls, that has extorted this plain Discourse from me, to recover if it may be, those who have gone astray in this Particular; and to prevent all, as much as possible, from falling into this deadly Sin for the Time to come. And notwithstanding the great Prevalency of this evil Custom, I *will* hope, if I am speaking to any who have hitherto allowed themselves in this sinful Practice, that, by the Assistance of God's Grace, they will seriously consider not so much what I have said, as what God himself says to them in his holy Word, *viz.* that *Thieves shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

But if they are resolved not to forsake these evil Ways, be the Consequence what it will; if they listen to this Discourse as to *a Tale that is told*, for their *Amusement* only, and not their *Amendment*, for which it is in Sincerity designed; yet, let me prevail with them, when they are going about to rob their Neighbour, in the Instance above-mentioned, to take this *one Thought* along with them; nay, let them leave it behind them, if they can; That the *Fuel* which they steal, may one Day serve, to kindle another *Fire* than what they intend, I mean, (for why should not I speak plainly?) the Fire of *Hell.*

But

But I ſaid, I would hope for better Things of all You at leaſt, my Brethren, whom the Providence of GOD has committed to my Charge; and that you will at length be convinced, how much better it will be for you, in this World and the next, to follow the Advice of the Apoſtle, in the ſecond Part of the Words, which I can but barely mention, viz. *to Labour, working with your Hands the Thing which is good.* By this Means, you will live in Credit with your Neighbours, and in the Favour of GOD; you will eat your Meat, which your own Hands have earned, with inexpreſſible Satisfaction; and the GOD who has promiſed, that *he that walketh righteouſly, Bread ſhall be given him*; the GOD *who takes Pleaſure in the Proſperity of his Servants*, ſhall ſo bleſs your honeſt Labours, that you ſhall *have to give*, as the Text requires in the laſt Place, *to him that needeth*. For ſince the Duty of Almſgiving is recommended, and enjoined even to Perſons in mean Circumſtances; we need not doubt, but that GOD, who requires it, will enable them to perform it; that *he that giveth to the Poor ſhall not lack*: That the honeſt Labourer, though Poor, ſhall, by the Bleſſing of Heaven, have ſomewhat to ſpare for the Relief of him who cannot Labour, who is poorer than himſelf. This will fill his Mind with Joy and Gladneſs in this World, and GOD will abundantly reward his *Labours*, and his *Charity*, in the World to come.

FINIS.

10.

SHORT ADDRESSES TO THE CHILDREN OF *SUNDAY SCHOOLS*, ON PARTICULAR TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN ADDRESS on the Institution of SUNDAY SCHOOLS, and the great and good Consequences of Visitors.

THE FOURTH EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

LONDON:

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ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.
LONDON.



TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE

FOR

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

OR

CHILDREN

TO USE

ADDRESSES

SHORT

TO THE REVEREND

SIR RICHARD KAYE, BARONET,

DEAN OF LINCOLN, &c. &c.

WHOSE EARLY, CONTINUED, AND BENEVOLENT

PATRONAGE OF THE INSTITUTION OF

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

HAS GREATLY CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR

GENERAL FLOURISHING STATE;

AND WHOSE GREAT ATTENTION TO THE

SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED IN THIS CITY

WILL EVER BE GRATEFULLY

ACKNOWLEDGED;

THESE ADDRESSES

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS

OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

BATH,
Sept. 1791.

WILLIAM BROOKE.


BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

WHOEVER ſteps out of the line of his profeſſion will be liable to cenſure, though not always deſerving of it. I therefore think it neceſſary to account for my offering theſe ſhort Addreſſes to Children.

On the firſt inſtitution of Sunday-Schools in the city of Bath, I entertained a favourable opinion of it; and, as I had leiſure, was deſirous of giving my aſſiſtance: I therefore with pleaſure accepted the propoſal made to me of becoming a member *for ſupporting the Sunday-Schools eſtabliſhed in this city*. I was ſoon convinced of the utility of the inſtitution; for thoſe children, who before the eſtabliſhment of Sunday-Schools here were accuſtomed to riot about the ſtreets in dirt and rags, and ſeldom uſed the name of the

Supreme Being but to take it in vain, grew cleanly, were better clothed, reverenced the name of GOD, and acquired ſome knowledge of their duty to *Him*, their *neighbour*, and *themſelves*. And it was evident that they were in a better ſtate of health, and more decent and reſpectful in their behaviour. Encouraged by theſe appearances, I earneſtly wiſhed to ſee induſtry blended with religion; and, with the aſſiſtance of ſeveral Ladies and Gentlemen, a SCHOOL of INDUSTRY was eſtabliſhed, conſiſting of one hundred and eighty children, in which

Thirty little Girls are taught to knit garters and ſtockings.

Thirty little Boys to knit garters and ſtockings; alſo to make nets of all ſorts.

Thirty Girls to ſpin wool for clothing and ſtockings; alſo to card wool.

Thirty Girls to ſpin flax to make their linen.

Thirty Boys to ſpin wool for clothing and ſtockings; alſo to card the wool.

Thirty Girls to ſew; who make and mend their linen, &c.

The

The whole are taught to read twice every day, and on Sundays are particularly inſtructed in their religious duties.

To theſe ſix Schools I have devoted great part of my time for upwards of five years, which has enabled me to diſcover the genius, abilities, and diſpoſitions, of the children. I perceived, that they learned to read, and repeat by memory, more expeditiouſly than I expected, but I was impatient in hearing them do this without underſtanding what they read or repeated. For though I recollected that in the early part of life I was in the ſame ſituation, yet my learning was progreſſive, for I had parents who were able and willing to improve my underſtanding; whereas the greater part of theſe poor children, who are under my care, would, when they left the School, be at a ſtand, or rather recede. To prevent this, as far as was in my power, I ſpoke to them on religious and moral ſubjects, ſuited my language and metaphors to their comprehenſion, and I had great ſatisfaction in obſerving that they gradually underſtood

my Addreſſes to them, and were frequently ſo ſenſibly affected, as even to ſhed tears.

On my return from the Schools, I endeavoured, at my leiſure, to recollect what I had ſaid to them, eſpecially what ſeemed moſt to have made an impreſſion on their minds; and I committed, from time to time, my addreſſes to paper; and finding, on reading them to other children and my ſervants, they underſtood and felt them, I ventured to communicate them to ſome of the Clergy, eminent for their learning and deſire to do good, who perſuaded me to publiſh them; as they aſſured me they were convinced ſuch a publication would be ſerviceable to the Sunday-Schools. This is my apology for publiſhing theſe Addreſſes.

Authors may be ſaid to have one of theſe three motives for publiſhing their works, *Gain*, *Fame*, or *a Deſire to do good*.

As I publiſh theſe Addreſſes (ſhould any profit ariſe from the publication) for the benefit of the Sunday-Schools, the School of Induſtry, and Blue School, eſtabliſhed in this city, I am cleared from the *firſt* of them

them as no gain can accrue to me from it. The *ſecond*, the ſimplicity of the ſtyle and the objects to whom they are directed, will clearly ſhew that I cannot be a candidate for fame: I therefore flatter myſelf, that I ſhall be credited, when I aſſert that my ſole motive is to *do good*.

I am now ſixty years of age; a few years more may bury me in oblivion: therefore my only deſire is to meet the approbation of my fellow-labourers in the ſame vineyard, and of that great, good, and merciful Being, who alone knows the ſecrets of the heart.

Though I have met with difficulties, they have been greatly overpaid by the pleaſure I have received from the conſciouſneſs that I have, to the utmoſt of my power, endeavoured to promote genuine Chriſtianity, and unite it with induſtry, from which, indeed, it cannot be ſeparated.

BATH,
Sept. 1791.

TO THE READER.

AS ſome words in theſe ADDRESSES *may be conſidered as unintelligible to* SUNDAY-SCHOOL CHILDREN, *I muſt obſerve, that if I uſed thoſe words in addreſſing them, I certainly explained them; but it would have occaſioned great circumlocution to have done it in print. I therefore have left it to the Viſiters, or thoſe who may read theſe Addreſſes to Children or the illiterate, to explain as they ſhall think proper.*

The method I have uſed with my own children or others has been, whilſt they were reading or repeating to me, to mark with a pencil the words I thought they did not underſtand, and when they had finiſhed reading or repeating, to aſk them the meaning, and, when neceſſary, explain them.

ADDRESSES

TO

Children of Sunday-Schools.

ST. JOHN vii. 17.

IF ANY MAN WILL DO HIS WILL, HE SHALL KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE WHETHER IT BE OF GOD, OR WHETHER I SPEAK OF MYSELF.

WHEN our Blessed Lord was instructing the Jews, they seemed much surprised at his doctrine: they could not believe that a person educated in the manner he was, could instruct them; he therefore repeated the words in the text, "*If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of* GOD, *or whether I speak of myself*;" that is to say, You are well acquainted with the Scriptures, in which the will of God is declared: If the advice I give you be agreeable to the laws of GOD, you will judge whether I offer you a doctrine of my own, or that which GOD himself has given you. This is your wish, or, I cannot be satisfied merely with hearing you read the Scriptures, and repeat the Catechism,

but I think it my duty frequently to give you good advice, and remind you of your duty to God, your neighbour, and yourſelves.

To read the Scriptures, or repeat them by memory, unleſs you endeavour to underſtand them, can be of little uſe. Birds have been taught to ſpeak, but not to underſtand what they ſpeak: The domeſtick and tame animals, ſuch as horſes, dogs and cats, are endued with reaſon ſufficient to love and fear their maſters: when they are kindly treated, they expreſs by their actions a ſurpriſing ſhare of gratitude, ſeem even ſorry when they have offended, and ſhew a fear of puniſhment. If you do not improve your minds by what you read and hear, you will be leſs valuable than thoſe animals, and inferior to them. If you do not love God, for all the benefits he daily beſtows on you, are not ſorry when you have broken his laws, and are not fearful of offending him, you are a diſgrace to mankind; for God has bleſſed you with reaſon and with ſpeech, and it is your duty to improve your minds by attending ſeriouſly to what you read, to endeavour to remember it, and to obſerve attentively, when I am inſtructing you, whether what I ſay to you be agreeable to the Scriptures and your Catechiſm; if it be, you may be aſſured, that what I teach you is the doctrine of God, and not merely my own, and as ſuch you ſhould pay it great attention.

The Scriptures were written for mankind in general; but I am under the neceſſity, owing to the ignorance of ſome of you, to explain them in ſuch a manner, that you may the more readily underſtand me, but I ſhall never explain them in a manner which is not perfectly agreeable to your Catechiſm, and to ſuch good books as are allowed to be read in this ſchool by your miniſters; if I did, my doctrine would not be the doctrine of GOD, but that of my own imagination, which would be very preſumptuous in me to give, and improper for you to receive.

To love GOD with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your ſoul, and with all your ſtrength, and to love your neighbour as yourſelf, is what I ſhall in different diſcourſes enforce, and do it in ſo plain and ſimple a manner, that what I ſay may be underſtood by every one of you.

I ſhall frequently aſk you what you remember of my Addreſſes on different ſubjects, in order to ſee whether they have made a proper impreſſion on your minds. If you attend to them, (as I hope you will) I ſhall have the heartfelt ſatisfaction of having laid the foundation of truly religious principles in your minds; and you will have reaſon to thank GOD for having given you an opportunity of knowing his will, and learning to be wiſe unto ſalvation. And as I have always acted by you as a ſincere and kind friend, I flatter myſelf you will

will not refuse me the greatest satisfaction I can receive, that of having contributed to your present and everlasting happiness; which God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ.

Genesis i. 3.

LET THERE BE LIGHT, AND THERE WAS LIGHT.

WHO can read these words without astonishment and reverential awe? Learned men in all ages have declared, that there is something so sublime and grand in them, that no other words could express. I earnestly wish to make the meaning of them plain to you, and that they may make some impression on your minds; at the same time I would hope not to lessen the dignity of them. I will therefore desire you to suppose yourselves on a very high hill, in a very dark night, so dark, that not the smallest ray of light appeared, that you could not see even your own hands, and suddenly you were to hear a voice uttering these words, *Let there be Light*; and in an instant you beheld the sun bright as at noon-day, and saw every object distinctly. This is giving you a very faint idea or notion of it; yet sure I am you would be struck with fear and amazement at such an event. But how unless

unleſs you afterwards reflected on it, you would receive no more benefit from it than the brute creation. Such a ſudden change from darkneſs to light would ſurprize and terrify them, but it would make no impreſſion on their ſenſes. To you, however, who are bleſſed with reaſon, it ſhould make the greateſt and moſt laſting impreſſion on your minds. Would you not immediately declare it to be the voice of the Almighty GOD that you heard, and that it was He who changed the night into day? Undoubtedly you would. Though you never before had ſeen ſo ſudden a change, you have frequently, before you went to reſt, obſerved it to be very dark—ſo much ſo, that you have not been able to ſee any object; when you have riſen in the morning, you have beholden the light of the ſun. Be then aſſured that the ſame great and good Being, who now orders the ſun to ſhine by day and the moon by night, was he who ſaid, *Let there be light, and there was light.* It is He who created the heaven and the earth, and all that in them is; it is He who continues to govern them; it is He who gave the Ten Commandments to Moſes to be delivered to the people of Iſrael, to be obſerved by them and their children for ever. Who then dares preſume wilfully to diſobey the order of ſo great and ſo powerful a Being, who is able to puniſh men on earth with all kind of diſeaſes and miſeries, and in another world, "to caſt them into outer

darkneſs, where there will be weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth; where the worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched."

Reflect on this, my little hearers, and be wiſe unto ſalvation.

I have thus explained to you the power of Almighty God in producing light out of darkneſs. To explain to you the great advantage that light is of to mankind muſt be unneceſſary; for young as you are, you are able to diſcover that day is a great bleſſing. I will therefore now ſpeak to you of the *Light of the Goſpel.*

Before our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt came on earth, the Laws of God were delivered to the Jews by Moſes. The promiſes made to them if they obſerved thoſe laws, and the puniſhments denounced againſt them if they diſobeyed, were underſtood by the Jews as relating only to the preſent life; very few having the leaſt idea that thoſe rewards and puniſhments would reach beyond the grave. When our Lord Jeſus Chriſt appeared on earth, he aſſured the Jews, that he came to fulfil the laws of God delivered to them by Moſes, and enforced by the Prophets, and not to deſtroy them. He made known to them, that he was the promiſed Meſſiah, which he proved by his miracles, his reſurrection and aſcenſion; he preached to them forgiveneſs of ſins, reſurrection from the grave, and life everlaſting; that the terms of forgiveneſs

of

of ſins were, a ſincere repentance, a firm belief that he was the only begotten Son of GOD, who had offered himſelf as a ſacrifice for the ſins of all mankind, and that through his merits they could be ſaved from puniſhment; which would be not only in this world, but in the next for ever and ever.

Now to be forgiven ſins on any terms was an unſpeakable favour; but to be promiſed everlaſting happineſs was a bleſſing that exceeded in mercy and kindneſs every thing that the moſt righteous men could expect; and as a proof of the greatneſs of this bleſſing, no one but the Son of GOD was thought worthy to deliver this divine promiſe to mankind.

In the Old Teſtament you read the laws of GOD in the Ten Commandments. In the New Teſtament the ſubſtance of them is alſo given, with a true account of the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, his miracles, doctrine, and promiſes, which are contained in the four Goſpels; and the inſtructions in the Epiſtles to the Romans, Hebrews, &c. will alſo be of great benefit to you, and will enlighten your minds, if you ſeriouſly attend to them.

I muſt obſerve to you, that the words *ignorance* and *darkneſs* are uſed to expreſs the ſame meaning. To be ignorant, therefore, of any thing is to be in the dark. Light not only means the being able to ſee any object with our eyes, but extends to the mind. Many of you, till you came to theſe

ſchools,

ſchools, were in groſs darkneſs as to your duties to GOD, your neighbour, and yourſelves: but your having been taught thoſe duties by reading the Bible, you are no longer in the dark; for you ſee and underſtand them; therefore, as it is from the Goſpel you receive this light, it is by diſtinction called the *Light of the Goſpel.*

As you value your immortal ſouls, let me intreat you, my dear young friends, to walk by this light as long as you live; and though, by the ſins of your firſt parents, you muſt paſs through the ſhadow of death, yet through the merits of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt you will riſe to a life of everlaſting light and happineſs.

LUKE xvii. 17.

JESUS ANSWERING, SAID, WERE THERE NOT TEN CLEANSED, BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?

ONE of the many miracles that our Saviour performed, was that of cleanſing ten lepers at the ſame time.

The leproſy was a diſorder of all others the moſt diſagreeable to the Jews, as they who were afflicted with it, were obliged to live ſeparate from thoſe who were free from it, until they obtained a

cure,

cure; nor could they again be admitted into the company even of their friends, until they had ſhewn themſelves to the prieſts, and the prieſts were ſatisfied they were clean. As theſe ten lepers were under a greater obligation to our Lord for healing them of the leproſy, than of any other diſorder, ſurely a greater degree of gratitude might be expected from ſuch who had received ſo great a benefit. In their way to the prieſts, they all perceived that they were healed, but only one of the ten returned to our Lord to give glory to God for ſo miraculous a cure, and this man was a ſtranger, a Samaritan—one who was not of the Jewiſh religion.

I am convinced, my little hearers, that there is not one amongſt you, who does not condemn the nine Jews, and applaud the Samaritan; yet ſtrange as it may appear to you, I fear you alſo have acted like the nine lepers. How often have many of you been ſick, in great pain, and in your diſtreſs have cried out "Lord, have mercy upon me!" The Lord has heard you; you have recovered. But have you, like the Samaritan, returned thanks to God for it? No; like the nine lepers, you have forgotten him who healed you.

How many of you have been recovered from dangerous ſickneſs within theſe two or three years, yet only one of you has even thought of returning

turning thanks to Almighty God, for the favours vouchsafed to her.

How few of you are thankful for the favours you daily receive from your kind benefactors, who act the part of tender parents to you! From a state of ignorance, they are at a great expence to have you instructed and brought up as Christians! to have you taught such employments as may for the present keep you from idleness, and be useful to you for the remainder of your days! Many of you are likewise cloathed, and, if you behave properly, placed out in a way to get your bread honestly. Your particular visitors give up their time to instruct you; are continually doing you some kindness in health or sickness; yet how few ever return them thanks, or seem sensible of the obligation!

It is not, children, that they want your thanks on their account, but on your own; for if you shew no gratitude to them whom you see daily, how can they expect that you will behave with gratitude to God, whom you have not seen?

Be assured that without gratitude you cannot be a child of God, nor an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

The child who is not sensible and thankful for the benefits he daily receives, must have a disposition to evil; and when his character is known,

will meet with no friends on earth, and can expect no favour from heaven.

Let me then intreat you to follow the example of the grateful leper; and when you call on the Lord for help in the time of need, he will certainly help you.

Job ii. 10.

WHAT! SHALL WE RECEIVE GOOD AT THE HAND OF GOD, AND SHALL WE NOT RECEIVE EVIL ALSO?

WHOEVER has attentively obſerved the conduct of mankind, that is, (men, women, and children) will agree, that ſuch a queſtion is very proper and neceſſary to be aſked. From the higheſt to the loweſt, from childhood to old age, we all receive good at the hand of God, and likewiſe what we conſider as evil. With the good we are pleaſed, at the evil we too frequently murmur. We are apt to look around us, and envy the ſtate of thoſe who appear to have a greater ſhare of the good things of this world than ourſelves. We think we are equally deſerving of them, and often diſcontentedly aſk, Why ſhould we not have as much happineſs as they

they have? Now it is to be observed, that in both these conjectures we may be mistaken.

We may not, perhaps, be so deserving of the good things of this life as some others; nor are we sure that those good things contribute so greatly to the happiness of those who receive them, as we are inclined to imagine.

Many of you, my little hearers, probably envy the sons and daughters of those who are or appear to be rich. Though their clothes may be more expensive, they are not more comfortable; though they have greater variety of provisions, they may not be more wholsome than those of which you daily partake; let *them* live ever so long, they cannot choose finer clothes, or have greater dainties, than they have at present; consequently they will grow tired of the one, and lose their appetites for the other: On the contrary, *your* situation will mend in every respect daily;—you will, by attending the Sunday Schools and School of Industry, learn to read, and you will be acquainted with your duty to God, your neighbour, and yourselves,—you will be cleanly and industrious, and learn to behave so as to gain the esteem of all who know you. Instead of being disliked by your superiors on account of your ignorance, idleness, rags, and dirt, you will be regarded by them for industry, cleanliness, and good conduct. They will not only be your friends

whilst

whilſt you are in the Schools, but when you are removed from them. Thus your happineſs will be equal, if not ſuperior, to thoſe in a higher ſtation.

For theſe bleſſings you can never be ſufficiently grateful: and if you ſhould ſuffer ſickneſs or diſtreſs of any kind, remember, it could not happen without the permiſſion of GOD; that ſickneſs and trouble were ſent either as puniſhments for ſins committed, or to remind you, that the enjoyments of this world are uncertain, and therefore that you ſhould look forward to *that* world where pleaſures are everlaſting, and never cloy.

Be thankful for the benefits you receive, and be reſigned to the evils which may befal you on your journey to the kingdom of heaven. You will then be happy on earth, and be bleſſed with everlaſting happineſs hereafter.

GENESIS xlv. 24.

SEE THAT YOU FALL NOT OUT BY THE WAY.

THIS was the advice given by Joſeph to his brethren, when he ſent them back to their father in the land of Canaan, to bring him into Egypt.

Egypt. Joſeph had not forgotten the ill treatment he had received from his brethren before they left him in the pit, nor the many diſputes which had ariſen amongſt them before he left his father. From this, as well as every other part of the Scriptures, we may receive benefit, if we ſeriouſly attend to them.

The advice given "not to fall out by the way," was given by a brother to his brothers; and unleſs he had known their diſpoſitions, it muſt have been very unneceſſary; for of all diſputes, thoſe amongſt brethren are the moſt unnatural and pernicious, and we ſhould think, were we not daily witneſſes to ſuch quarrels, that it was almoſt impoſſible for brothers and ſiſters to be enemies to each other. To be children of the ſame parents, brought up under the ſame roof, to have ſhared the ſame happineſs and diſtreſs together, ſhould unite them in the bonds of love; and nothing could break ſuch bonds, had they but a due ſenſe of their duty to God and their neighbour.

Though you, my little hearers, are not all born of the ſame parents, yet you are all brethren. The ſame God created you, and the ſame Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, redeemed you.

This life is frequently compared to a journey. We are all fellow-travellers to a country as far ſuperior to this as light is to darkneſs. There "all is peace, all is love." The joys of it are

ſuch

uch "as eye hath not ſeen nor ear heard, nor
ath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."
You, my little hearers, are going on your way to
his heavenly country. During your journey
hither, you muſt not fall out, but be kind and
riendly, and do all in your power to promote the
elfare and improvement of each other. But this
eavenly diſpoſition cannot be acquired without
true ſenſe of religion. The chief end of Sun-
ay-Schools is to teach you this uſeful leſſon, to
orm your minds to enjoy every thing that is
ood, and every thing that is amiable. You will
arn in them your duty towards GOD and your
eighbour, and particularly to conſider yourſelves
s brethren.

Young as you are, you are able to do many kind
ffices to each other; by ſo doing, you will acquire
love for each other, and a diſpoſition fit to enjoy
at world to which you are going. Whereas, if
ou fall out by the way, rendering evil for evil, or,
hat is worſe, ingratitude for kindneſs; you will
ot be admitted into that delightful kingdom,
here all is joy, peace, and love; where angels,
d archangels, and all the glorious company of
aven, unite in ſinging *Glory to* GOD *on high, on*
rth peace, good-will towards men; but you will be
omed to that kingdom, prepared for the Devil
d wicked ſpirits, where deſpair, envy, hatred,

malice, and every thing that is painful, poſſeſs the minds of all who inhabit thoſe places of miſery.

Therefore, as you wiſh to meet together in that world of everlaſting harmony and love, live together here as brethren, and ſee that you fall not out by the way.

Acts ii. 7, 8.

AND THEY WERE ALL AMAZED, AND MARVELLED, SAYING ONE TO ANOTHER, BEHOLD, ARE NOT ALL THESE WHICH SPEAK GALILEANS?

AND HOW HEAR WE EVERY MAN IN HIS OWN TONGUE, WHEREIN WE WERE BORN?

THIS moſt miraculous and ſurpriſing circumſtance happened when the Apoſtles and Jews of different parts of the world had aſſembled to keep the feaſt of Pentecoſt, which was obſerved as a time of thankſgiving for gathering in the fruits of the earth, and anſwers to our harveſt. This day is called by Chriſtians Whitſunday, from the cuſtom of young perſons who were to be admitted into the Chriſtian Church wearing white robes*.

* "White robes were worn in ancient times, they ſay,
"And gave denomination to the day:
"But inward purity's required moſt
"To make fit temples for the Holy Ghoſt."

On

on this day; and it was on this day, and at the ſſembly beforementioned, that the Holy Ghoſt came down on the Apoſtles, in the ſhape of fiery tongues, and beſtowed on them the gift of tongues, that is, a power to ſpeak all languages; it is therefore a day appointed by our church to be kept holy.

That you may form ſome notion of this extraordinary event, I muſt remind you, that the Apoſtles were in general poor fiſhermen, or perſons of mean trades, men who had not received a learned education; they were therefore incapable of ſpeaking thoſe different languages by any other means than by the immediate will of God.

You have heard, and know, that there are people in this world who are called by different names, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Germans, Italians, Turks, &c. and that they all ſpeak languages different from us and from each other. Now the moſt learned men of all nations learn with difficulty the language which is different from their own, ſo as to be clearly underſtood by thoſe with whom they converſe in it. What then muſt you think of twelve unlearned men ſpeaking at once to ſo many people of different nations in their own languages, "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Meſopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Aſia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and ſtrangers of Rome, Jews and proſe-

lytes, Cretes and Arabians, declaring to them the wonderful works of GOD."

Suppoſe that ſeveral people of different nations came to ſee theſe Schools, and wiſhed to be informed how you are inſtructed, and what you do, and all at once ſome amongſt you began to talk to thoſe ſtrangers in their own language, and gave them the information they deſired, how great would be your ſurpriſe to hear your ſchool-fellows have ſuch power; they themſelves would be equally ſurpriſed; and great alſo would be the aſtoniſhment of the ſtrangers. This miracle of the Apoſtles ſpeaking different languages greatly affected thoſe who heard them, and converted many to Chriſtianity in thoſe days, and has ſince that time been one of the many proofs in favour of it.

Let me obſerve to you, that miracles were never performed but for ſome good purpoſe. Miraculous puniſhments ſhew the power and diſpleaſure of the Almighty, and ſerve to terriſy the wicked from diſobeying his laws. Miraculous cures ſhew that the ſame great and good GOD is able to cure us of all diſeaſes. Miraculous deliverances teſtify that he can ſave us from our enemies or any great danger. Thoſe miracles performed by our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, were deſigned to convince the Jews and other nations, that CHRIST was the true Meſſiah, promiſed by GOD, to appear in due time.

Of all the bleſſings ever vouchſafed by GOD to man, that of ſending his only-begotten Son on earth to ſave ſinners was certainly the greateſt. It was therefore accompanied by aſtoniſhing miracles. He was born of a virgin; angels appeared to the ſhepherds declaring that a Saviour was born, directed them where to find him, and with a multitude of the heavenly hoſt praiſed GOD, and thus proclaimed the birth of the great Redeemer: *Glory to* GOD *in the Higheſt, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.* Theſe glad tidings were made known to all nations by the Apoſtles, who were enabled to ſpeak different languages.

The hearing theſe unlearned men converſe with them in their own language muſt undoubtedly have greatly contributed to their converſion; add to this the power of curing diſeaſes; and to ſum up the whole, the tendency of the religion they taught was ſuch as exceeded all the rules given by the wiſeſt men of thoſe or any other nations. The doctrines and precepts of the Chriſtian religion were ſo clear, that the moſt ignorant could not but underſtand them, nor was the complying with them difficult; they not only made men happy in this world, but promiſed them, on the terms of the Goſpel, everlaſting happineſs in another.

Since then this miracle converted ſo many nations who were heathens, remember on the annual return on the feaſt of Pentecoſt (or Whitſunday)

this great event, and be thankful for it: Without it we might now have been ſtrangers to Chriſtianity, and never ſhared the bleſſings of the Goſpel, bleſſings which exceed all the gifts that the greateſt kings on earth can beſtow.

What are titles and riches, when compared to the name of *Chriſtian*, and the benefits of the Goſpel? Worldly honours die with us, and can only produce a ſhort-lived happineſs, but the eternal glory and bliſs in heaven will remain when the world ſhall be no more.

Oh! how great the joy to be admitted to the preſence of Almighty God, his Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Apoſtles, the ſpirits of all good men made perfect, never more to be diſtreſſed in body or mind! The rich and great have their good things in this world, but in the world to come, none but real Chriſtians will enjoy the promiſes of the Goſpel. And though you, my dear children, are now in a low ſtate of life, yet if you are induſtrious, humble, and faithful ſervants of God, the time will come when, through the merits of Chriſt, you will be raiſed to heaven, and join with all the Angelic hoſt in ſinging, "Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

ISAIAH liii. 3.

A MAN OF SORROWS, AND ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF.

THESE words refer to our Blessed Lord, the Saviour of lost mankind, and are therefore the more surprising. Why was the Son of GOD thus grieved and sorrowful? He had done no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; his sorrows therefore could not be on his own account: From whence then did they proceed? Sure I am you are desirous to know the cause of this. His sorrow and grief, my little hearers, were for lost, wicked, and abandoned men. Adam and Eve first began to disobey the laws of GOD; their children followed their example; and the wickedness of man was so great in the earth, that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." GOD therefore resolved to destroy them; but Noah being a righteous man, he and his family were saved, with a male and female of every living creature. Notwithstanding Noah forewarned that wicked generation of the great evil which would certainly befal them, they continued in their evil ways, and laughed at Noah, and the Ark he was building to save himself and family. But at length the clouds poured down rain, and the water-springs came out of the earth, and the rain did not cease

for forty days and nights; so that the highest hills were covered with water, and all the inhabitants of the earth were destroyed except Noah and his family, who only were preserved in the Ark.

Noah, after quitting the Ark, till his death, was a man who walked with GOD; but his children by degrees forgat the mercy shewn to them and their family; and they and their posterity worshipped idols and carved images, neglecting the worship of the true GOD. That great and good Being was nevertheless so kind and gracious to them, that he sent his Prophets (men divinely inspired) to reveal his will to them, to promise all those who obeyed him, that they should enjoy health, long life, and every earthly blessing; and to assure the disobedient, that they should be afflicted with various diseases, be led into captivity, and suffer by the sword, pestilence, and famine. Yet so hard were their hearts, that they continued to turn from the only true GOD, and to worship images made of wood and stone.

As many of you read the Bible, you are well acquainted with the wicked and ungrateful behaviour of the Jews, and that they were taken away captives from their own country by the King of Babylon. As GOD is ever merciful, and wished to save these people, whom he had particularly chosen to make his laws known to mankind, he at length permitted his only Son Jesus Christ to come

down

down from heaven to dwell upon earth, to take on him our nature; that he might instruct them, endeavour to bring them to repent of their wickedness, and again to turn to the LORD their GOD.

In the New Testament you are informed of this great event, and read the account of our Saviour's miracles, his kindness and forbearance, how he went about doing good, and when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he was most cruelly treated, instead of desiring the Almighty GOD to punish those who persecuted him, he prayed for them; and when he looked at the great and populous city of Jerusalem, and knew that it would shortly be destroyed, and that the inhabitants would suffer incredible hardships from war and famine, HE WEPT. Think, my young friends, with what compassion he beheld that city, when he drew near to it, and wept for the calamities which he foresaw would befal those hardened sinners, though he knew they intended to take away his life. Thus his sorrows and his grief arose from his compassion to mankind: He foresaw that all his endeavours would not soften the hearts of the far greater part of that stubborn people; that they would reject the mercies offered to them from GOD by him, and that many of them would be for ever lost.

You, my little friends, cannot but condemn these Jews for their cruelty and hardness of heart, and would not designedly follow such an example,

but how many in our days act with as much obstinacy and disobedience as the Jews!

If you neglect to pay a due regard to those commands which our gracious Lord has given you, you may be said to crucify him afresh, and to renew his sorrows. If he was grieved because the Jews, whom he came from heaven to save, would not attend to his doctrine, will he not also be grieved to observe that we, to whom his gospel is made known, will not be governed by it, though we can be saved by no other means? Undoubtedly he will.

Remember, children, that whenever you do any thing that is contrary to the laws of God, made known to you in the Scriptures, you are grieving that kind, merciful, and heavenly Master, who suffered so much on earth to save your immortal souls from everlasting destruction.

As the word of God therefore directs, "Cease to do evil, and learn to do well;" for our Lord has assured us, "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." May you then, on your entrance into another world, hear these gracious words from our Lord, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

PROVERBS xii. 10.

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN REGARDETH THE LIFE OF HIS BEAST.

I SHALL endeavour to convince you that it is your duty to treat all the brute creation with humanity, that is, with tenderneſs. Now by the brute creatures you are to underſtand every creature that has life, though no reaſon or ſpeech to complain, nor the power of protecting itſelf from the injuries which may be done to it.

In the Bible you are told that GOD made the world, and all that is therein. This alone ſhould be ſufficient to make you treat all creatures with compaſſion, and avoid doing them any injury; for you have only to aſk yourſelf this queſtion, By whom were theſe defenceleſs animals made? The anſwer will be, by ALMIGHTY GOD. This reflection then would prevent your being guilty of any act of cruelty to them; for as they are the work of a great, good, and merciful GOD, to injure them, or to deface his work, muſt doubtleſs be criminal. How thankful ſhould you be to GOD for hindering many animals from injuring you, which they certainly could and would do, if their divine Creator had not implanted in them a fear of man. He has given you reaſon to know what is right and what is wrong; and that reaſon

forbids you to injure thoſe helpleſs and innocent creatures that are in your power. It is an act of cruelty and injuſtice in children to deprive them of life. Since the Almighty Creator of us and them has permitted us to kill many of them for our food, proper perſons may kill them for that purpoſe; but they ſhould do it in ſuch a manner as to give them as little pain as poſſible.

I well know that you can only exert cruelty to the ſmaller animals, as the larger are too powerful for you, ſhould you attempt doing them an injury. I ſhall therefore confine myſelf more particularly to them. Now I am well convinced that a *good* child, who reflects on what he, or ſhe, is doing, would not be guilty of any act of cruelty. Do not ſuppoſe, becauſe an inſect is ſmall, that its pain when hurt is alſo ſmall; very far from it, for in all probability it is greater; the ſmaller any being is, the finer and more delicate are its parts, and therefore we have reaſon to believe it ſuffers a greater degree of pain. It is to be hoped, that if children are ſo loſt to humanity as to be cruel, their parents, relations, or whoever has authority over them, will diſcourage it, and, if neceſſary, convince them, by corporal puniſhment, that the pain they then feel is not ſo great as what they made the poor harmleſs inſect ſuffer. Let me alſo remind you, that by treating theſe and other creatures with cruelty, by giving them pain, you

act

act contrary to that rule which for diſtinction's ſake is called the *Golden Rule*—the doing to others as you would they ſhould do unto you *. Now I am ſure you would not like to have pins run into you, or be confined in a place where you could hardly breathe. Beſides, cruelty to the brute creation ſhews a bad diſpoſition. To uſe any thing cruelly, becauſe you have it in your power to do ſo, ſhews that you would do the ſame by any of your ſchool-fellows, if you could do it without puniſhment.

When once therefore you are known to be of a cruel diſpoſition, you will loſe the love of every one, and you will be unhappy yourſelf, and (what is ſtill worſe) you will be deprived of the love of GOD, and of his Son JESUS CHRIST, who was the pattern of mercy and goodneſs to mankind. He never injured any one, but went about doing good even to thoſe who cruelly treated him.

If, therefore, you expect to gain the love of your relations or friends in this world, or be received hereafter into the kingdom of heaven, you muſt be merciful "as your Father who is in heaven is merciful."

* I am well acquainted with a gentleman of learning, eminent for his moral and religious good qualities, who had a large family, and took the greateſt pains to inſtil this rule in the minds of his children on all occaſions, and it anſwered his expectations.

EPHES. iv. 25.

PUT AWAY LYING, SPEAK EVERY MAN TRUTH TO HIS NEIGHBOUR.

IN the whole catalogue of vices, there is not one ſo generally detected as lying; and, what is very ſtrange, there is no vice ſo common, particularly among children, and the uneducated part of mankind. It is a vice for which nothing can be admitted as an excuſe. Other ſins may be committed without conſideration; but lying is a deliberate act: it is therefore the more inexcuſable. Other injuries to ſociety are moſtly puniſhable by the laws, and therefore are not ſo often committed; but lying (unleſs on very particular occaſions) cannot be puniſhed by the magiſtrate or the law, which makes it more frequent than any other vice.

Although others are occaſionally injured by a liar, he himſelf is in the end the greateſt ſufferer; for no ſooner is any one known to be a notorious liar, but he is deſpiſed by every one, and ſhunned as a dangerous acquaintance. No man can be ſafe with him; nothing that he promiſes to *do* can be depended on, and whatever he *ſays* is diſbelieved, even when he may ſpeak the truth. The liar may imagine that he ſhall not be diſcovered, but in general liars have ſuch ſhallow memories, that they betray

betray themſelves. If at any time they get ſome ſmall degree of credit, or preſent advantage by it, it is but of ſhort duration, and the bad conſequences attending it prove in the end that they are ſufferers by it. I am convinced that children ſeldom tell lies, except to hide ſome faults they have committed. Now the fault was either deſigned, or accidental; ſuppoſe it were deſigned, no fault that ſuch children as you generally commit, can be ſo bad as a lie; and if the fault was done by accident, neglect, careleſſneſs, &c. it muſt certainly be forgiven ſooner than a lie.

You may imagine that you can deceive your fellow-ſcholars, your teachers, or viſitors, which you are very ſeldom able to do; for you know by experience that you ſcarcely ever told a lie, that was not found out. But, ſuppoſe you could deceive *them*, you cannot deceive GOD. He not only ſees and hears every thing you do, but knows your very thoughts. He has in the Scriptures denounced vengeance againſt liars; the Devil is called "the father of liars," and ſurely you would not forſake the good and gracious GOD, who created you, protects you, and has promiſed you everlaſting happineſs in heaven, to be the child of the Devil, and ſuffer eternal torments, and live for ever with murderers, adulterers, blaſphemers, thieves, and liars.

The

The choice is now in your own power. Remember, that a good name is better than great riches; it will insure the love of all good men in this world, and in the next the blessings promised, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, to all those who believe in GOD and keep his commandments.

An Address to the Children of the School of Industry, on the Death of Mrs. POWER.

Sunday, Aug. 22, 1790.

PROV. x. 7.

THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED.

THOUGH many of you are very young, yet the greater part will be capable of understanding what I am now going to say to you. I shall talk to you *on DEATH*, which is a serious and melancholy subject. You have lost a good, kind, and generous friend; one who gave up her time to you, instructed you in your duty to GOD, your neighbour, and yourselves: and did every thing in her power to make you industrious and cleanly. She was not only one of the first promoters of the School of Industry, but one of the most active and best informed: though she lived at some distance from this house, she attended

tended it constantly and regularly. In winter, she disregarded the frost, hail, snow, rain, and piercing winds; and in summer, the sultry heat, or scorching sun; in order to give you her best advice and instruction, that you might grow wiser and better, and learn to be of use to yourselves and others.

It is almost needless to tell you, that this excellent friend was Mrs. Powell. Alas! she is now no more: for she died last Wednesday se'ennight, and was buried at Charlcombe last Thursday. I attended the funeral; and had she been buried in this city, you also should have followed her to the grave. During her illness, I often saw her; she asked after you, and seemed only desirous of living, that she might continue to be of use (as she said) *to her poor Children*. Believe me, she sincerely loved you; her greatest pleasure was to see you behave well; and you know she always rewarded the good, and mildly punished the bad; yet when they regarded her reproofs, and acted accordingly, she forgave their faults, and encouraged them to behave better for the future. You cannot so soon have forgotten the kind manner in which she used to speak to you; she rejoiced when she could praise you. But alas! we shall see her no more amongst us! she is gone to her long home. We may soon go to her, but she cannot come to us.

I am sure you who are good children loved her, and you all must feel her loss. I see many of you

shed

shed tears; they are tears of gratitude and sensibility, and become you; nor am I ashamed to mix mine with yours, for I greatly esteemed Mrs. Power. I am convinced, that had she recovered, and again come amongst you, you would have received her with great pleasure, and have done every thing to have gained her approbation. Let me then intreat you, in the name of that dear and worthy friend, to continue to be good, industrious, and cleanly, for her sake and your own; and let not all her care and trouble be lost. You will then be happy *here* and *hereafter*, and will meet her, never more to part again, in a world where happiness is complete. There you will know no pain, sickness, or grief; all distinction betwixt rich and poor will be no more. The good will be exalted, and the wicked laid low.

How soon our souls may be required of us, God alone knows. A few weeks ago we none of us thought that we should never see Mrs. Power amongst us again. She was then in health, but not so well as when she first entered on the care of you; for her great attention to you, I fear, shortened her days. Let me intreat you, my dear children, although you are so young, not to depend too much on life, for your youth cannot protect you from death; and this you see daily. Remember, therefore, your Creator thus early; for a short life of true religion, founded on the princi-

principles of the Goſpel, is better than a long one, without the love of CHRIST; and ſhould you be removed, in the courſe of GOD's providence, from this world in your youth, and you have profited by the religious inſtruction Mrs. POWER and your Viſitors have given you, be aſſured that, through the merits of JESUS CHRIST, you will be partakers of everlaſting happineſs; and if you are bleſſed with long life, and you continue to ſet GOD always before you, and by your example and advice endeavour to cauſe others to do the ſame, you will meet with the protection of GOD in this world, and be graciouſly received in the next; and when you lie on your death-bed, you will remember the good advice you received from Mrs. POWER, your other Viſitors, and myſelf, and die with the pleaſing hope that you will be received into heaven by your compaſſionate Saviour and Mediator JESUS CHRIST, with this bleſſed mark of his approbation, "Welcome, ye good and "faithful ſervants, enter ye into the joy of your "Lord."

PSALM lxxvii. 3.

WHEN I AM IN HEAVINESS, [*trouble, or any kind of affliction*] I WILL THINK UPON GOD.

THIS reſolution of the Pſalmiſt is worthy of our ſerious regard and example; for as Job very juſtly obſerves, "Man is born to trouble, "as the ſparks fly upward."

Now there are troubles of the body, and troubles of the mind. Thoſe of the *body* are pain and ſickneſs, and were I to name them, the catalogue would be ſo great, that you would be ſurpriſed that I ſhould now be alive to tell you of them. The troubles of the *mind* are almoſt as numerous. What a miſerable being would man be, if he had no one to whom he might apply for help in his troubles. Bleſſed for ever be GOD, who is able and willing to relieve him; a Sun to cheer and enlighten him, and a Shield to defend him.

In diſorders of the *body*, we apply to thoſe whoſe profeſſion it is to heal the ſick; a knowledge which they acquire by application to that particular ſcience; and when we are cured, we in general ſay, that ſuch a perſon cured us of ſuch a diſorder, but we forget that, without GOD's aſſiſtance, the cure could never have been effected. It was the Almighty GOD who created the various herbs and plants, and gave them a healing quality, and

then

then graciously gave men skill to discover their virtues. We should therefore consider God as our first and great physician, without whose assistance no cure can be performed; and it is to him we should always look up for relief, using at the same time such remedies as are likely to be serviceable to us; for I do not mean that we are to neglect doing as much as is in our power to relieve ourselves, but only to remind you that without the assistance or permission of Almighty God no bodily disease can be removed. When therefore you are in pain or sickness, think upon God, and pray to him.

The disorders of the mind are also very great, and occasion us frequent trouble and affliction. Death stands foremost in the catalogue; for how few can think of it without the greatest uneasiness! To leave all that is dear to us on earth; to feel those agonies that in general accompany the separation of soul and body; to be laid in the earth, there to rot, and at last return to dust; and to reflect that the soul may be miserable for ever, is sufficient to make the stoutest heart to tremble. The ingratitude, hard-heartedness, cruelty, and fraud of mankind, bring on us many uneasy hours; and who can deliver us from these calamities? From death no man can deliver us; for, when our first parents disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit in paradise, God said they

should

ſhould ſurely die; but as he is full of mercy and compaſſion, he permitted his only-begotten Son JESUS CHRIST to be our Mediator and Redeemer: He therefore came from heaven to inſtruct us in our duty to GOD, and having ſuffered death for our ſins, became the Saviour of all who put their truſt in him, and of all who truly repent of their ſins, and rely upon his merits for pardon: he aroſe again on the third day, and aſcended into heaven, and has aſſured us that we alſo ſhall riſe again from the grave, and have everlaſting life. The real Chriſtian, therefore, may now ſay, "O death, "where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy vic-"tory?" But to thoſe who do not obey the Goſpel, nor truſt in the merits of the death of CHRIST, death will be to them terrible. Surely it were better for them that they were never to riſe again, than to riſe to everlaſting miſery.

When thoſe to whom we have been kind, or from whom we have a right to expect aſſiſtance, ſlight and neglect us in our diſtreſs, we cannot but conſider this as a grievous evil; and how wretched ſhould we be in ſuch a ſituation, if we had no one to whom we might look up for ſuccour! If thoſe who are ſtronger or more powerful than ourſelves injure us, who ſhall we find to befriend us? O you, my little hearers, whoſe relations are barely able to afford you the neceſſaries of life, and are not able to aſſiſt you in any kind of diſ-

treſs,

treſs, you ought to be particularly attentive in your duty to GOD, and never let a morning or evening paſs without prayers, praiſes, and thankſgiving. You muſt not only believe in GOD, but you muſt love, fear, and put your whole truſt in him; then whatever evil befals you, if you will apply to GOD, as you are commanded to do by his word, and encouraged to do by his promiſes, he will either relieve you from it, or give you grace to bear it with Chriſtian reſignation; being aſſured that your Father who is in heaven careth for you, and that your troubles in this life will terminate in your everlaſting happineſs. The time will ſoon come, when all ſorrows will ceaſe, when you will be partakers of thoſe bleſſings which they alone can receive who have accuſtomed themſelves to think upon GOD, and to pray to him as their heavenly Father, ever preſent, ready, and able to protect them in all their troubles in this life, to ſupport them in the hour of death, and to deliver them in the day of judgment.

MATTH. vi. 9.

AFTER THIS MANNER PRAY YE: OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, &c.

THIS prayer is called the Lord's Prayer, because our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST gave this prayer to his Disciples, to be used by them and by all Christians. Now, children, you must observe, that the teaching of this prayer to the Disciples of CHRIST, was not only a very great benefit to them, but to all who use it. Our ignorance is so great, that many of our prayers, if granted, instead of being blessings to us, would rather in their consequences be as curses. Although you, my little hearers, know how and in what manner to ask for any thing you want of your parents, superiors, or equals, yet I am well convinced that you are not sufficiently acquainted with the difference there is between *asking* and *praying*. *Asking* is a desire to procure something of another that you have not, but which you think if you had, it would contribute to your pleasure or advantage. *Praying* is desiring of Almighty GOD to give you such things, or do that for you which neither your parents, your superiors, or equals, have it in their power to bestow.

When you ask a favour of any one, you naturally do it with respect and humility, or in such a manner

manner as you think will be moſt likely to perſuade the perſon to give you what you aſk. You would not do it in a careleſs or rude manner, for that you know would affront him of whom you aſked the favour; and you would not only be denied your preſent requeſt, but any future one you might make to him. When therefore you intend praying to GOD, recollect to whom you are offering up your prayers; that it is to that Almighty Being who created you and all the world; that he not only ſees you, hears every word you ſpeak, but alſo knows your very thoughts; that he is able and willing to grant your petitions, and has promiſed that he will comply with your prayers, if they are ſincere from the heart, and the things you aſk are proper for you. But ſhould you pray only with your lips, and not from the heart, praying in a negligent, unthinking manner, you would be making a mockery of prayer, and inſtead of receiving bleſſings, you would bring down curſes on yourſelves; for GOD is not to be mocked.

I intreat you, therefore, as you wiſh to be happy in this world, and everlaſtingly ſo in that which is to come, that whenever you pray to GOD, you do it in the moſt ſolemn, ſerious, and humble manner, and with a firm belief that your prayers will be heard; you will then pray properly. It too often happens that the perſon of whom we aſk any favour, and who kindly condeſcends to grant it, and alſo permits us frequently to aſk his aſſiſtance, inſtead

of increaſing our reſpect and gratitude, it leſſens it; ſo I have alſo obſerved, that when you repeat the Lord's Prayer, which is a Prayer you uſe oftener than any other, you kneel down in an unbecoming manner, and begin the prayer in great haſte, and run through it as if you had not ſufficient time yourſelf, or as if GOD, to whom you pray, were deſirous of your finiſhing your petition immediately. I conjure you to avoid ſuch conduct, and before you begin the prayer, kneel with reverence and awe; and before you open your lips, raiſe your eyes and hands towards the heavens, remembering that you are praying to the God of heaven and earth, to whom the greateſt princes on earth, when compared, are but as duſt. Repeat every ſentence ſlowly and with reflection, and when you have finiſhed the whole, by adding *Amen*, (that is, GOD grant it may be ſo) riſe gradually from your knees, and either ſit down or ſtand up without noiſe, hurry, or confuſion: by ſo doing you will bring down a bleſſing on you. It is my moſt fervent prayer that you may always do this.

ALMIGHTY GOD, imprint a reverential awe of thy greatneſs in the hearts of theſe children; animate them with gratitude and love for thy daily kindneſs, care, and protection, and with a deſire to obey thy commands; and may they be ſanctified by thy Holy Spirit, ſo as always to walk in the way ſet before them by thy only begotten Son JESUS CHRIST,

CHRIST, who in compaſſion to our infirmities came down from heaven to inſtruct us, and through whoſe merits alone we can expect to be received into that kingdom which he has prepared for them who love, fear, and obey Thee.

ON CHRISTMAS-DAY.

LUKE ii. 11.

FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY, IN THE CITY OF DAVID, A SAVIOUR, WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD.

THIS day is conſidered and obſerved by the members of the Church of England as a great feſtival or holiday, that we may from our infancy keep in remembrance the birth of CHRIST, the only begotten Son of GOD, "who for us men and "for our ſalvation came down from heaven." His coming was foretold by the Prophets in the Old Teſtament; and we are informed in the New, that an angel was ſent from heaven to declare to Mary, the mother of this great Saviour, that ſhe ſhould bring forth a ſon, and that ſhe ſhould call him by the name of JESUS. And on the day he was born, we are told by the Evangeliſt St. Luke, that an angel came to ſome "ſhepherds who were attend-"ing their flocks by night, and the glory of the "Lord ſhone round about them, and they were ſore "afraid; but the angel ſaid unto them, Fear not,

"for behold, I bring you good tidings of great
"joy, which ſhall be to all people, for unto you
"is born this day a Saviour, which is CHRIST the
"Lord; and ſuddenly there was with the angel a
"multitude of the heavenly hoſt, praiſing God,
"and ſaying, Glory to GOD in the higheſt, and
"on earth peace, good will towards men."

When an earthly prince is born, the day is introduced with the firing of canon, bells ringing, and other demonſtrations of joy; the night is almoſt changed into day by illuminations, bonfires, &c. but how trifling are the greateſt rejoicings men can ſhew, when compared to thoſe of the heavenly hoſt of angels! The birth-day of a prince is a day of rejoicing to that nation where the prince is born, but the birth-day of JESUS CHRIST ſhould be a day of rejoicing through the whole world, and ſhould be obſerved in a very different manner; not in noiſe and tumult, but in the ſilent meditation and rejoicing of the heart. The princes of this world, at whoſe birth we rejoice, may prove curſes inſtead of a bleſſing to a nation; but the Prince whoſe birth we celebrate this day, is the Prince of Peace to all the world. Other princes may be *deſirous* of making their people happy, though it is not in their power; but JESUS CHRIST, our Lord and Prince, is not only willing but able to make us happy; on him alone we can depend for aſſiſtance. He has graciouſly promiſed to all who are his ſubjects, (that is, to all who believe

in

n his Goſpel and obey it) that he will protect hem in this world, aſſiſt, and introduce them to a kingdom of everlaſting happineſs in the next.

Who can read this kind invitation from their Lord, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*, without ſtrong emotion of gratitude, and fervently lifting up the heart to heaven in theſe or the like expreſſions: — In thee, O Lord, I put my truſt, for thou art my rock and defence. As long as thou art for me, who ſhall be againſt me?

Theſe thoughts, my dear young friends, ſhould employ your minds on all occaſions, but more particularly on this day.

Had JESUS CHRIST never been born, we ſhould never have had any proſpect of dwelling in heaven with the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; but through him we are become inheritors of the heavenly kingdom.

What are rank, power, and riches, in this world, when compared to that glorious inheritance prepared for us in heaven, if we accept this kind invitation, repent, believe, and obey him, and thus prove ourſelves loyal ſubjects to our Lord and Saviour? Even the greateſt princes on earth would with pleaſure lay down their crowns at his feet, to be admitted into his kingdom as ſubjects. Oh, how great then, my little hearers, ought your joy and gratitude to be, who have neither rank, power, or riches; who are many of you clothed

and fed by the benevolence of charitable and well-diſpoſed Chriſtians! Yet low as your preſent ſtate is, if you will pray to GOD for his Holy Spirit to enable you to do your duty towards him and your neighbour in this world, relying on the merits of CHRIST for acceptance, you will enjoy thoſe bleſſings in heaven which the rich and great in this world will never obtain, but on the terms of the Goſpel, and by making a right uſe of thoſe talents which GOD has given them for the good of mankind; for to "whom much is given, of "them much will be required."

Many and great are the failings of all of us; but that which of all others is particularly to be guarded againſt is INGRATITUDE. Take heed, therefore, daily to return thanks to Almighty GOD for the manifold benefits conferred on you; "but above "all, for his ineſtimable love in the redemption "of mankind by our Lord JESUS CHRIST."

Conſider therefore, not only on this day, but at all times, what great things CHRIST has done for you; ſuch thoughts will animate you with love, gratitude, reſpect, and obedience, and encourage you to rely on the merits of your merciful Saviour. You may then reſt aſſured, that he will receive you into the kingdom prepared for thoſe who put their truſt in him, and obey his Goſpel; which that we all may do, GOD of his infinite mercy grant, through the merits and for the ſake of JESUS CHRIST, his Son and our Lord.

ECCLES.

Eccles. xii. 1.

REMEMBER THY CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH.

THIS advice was given by King Solomon, not only to his own, but to all children. There are few if any among you my little hearers, who do not know that Solomon was the wiſeſt among the ſons of men, yet ſome of you, perhaps, cannot tell me why he was ſo called; I will therefore inform you. When Solomon became King over Iſrael, after the death of his father David, it pleaſed God to give him his choice of wiſdom, long life, riches, or power; he very prudently choſe wiſdom; God therefore gave him not only an underſtanding heart, which he had aſked, but all the other bleſſings which he had not aſked. The advice he gave to young perſons, to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, was no ſmall proof of his wiſdom; and I moſt ſincerely hope that you will attend to this good advice, and follow it, as it will make you wiſe unto ſalvation.

I ſhall endeavour to explain what is meant by remembering your Creator; and then why you are particularly adviſed to remember him in the days of your youth.

That you may remember your Creator properly, I adviſe you to begin with aſking yourſelves this queſtion, Who is my Creator? The anſwer will

be, GOD. This muſt immediately fill your minds with reverential awe and ſerious reflections, that GOD not only created you, but continues to preſerve you from all dangers ghoſtly and bodily; that is, from thoſe evils which may affect the ſoul, and thoſe that may hurt the body. The higheſt reſpect, love, and gratitude, are therefore due to him; he acts towards you as a kind and good father, not only preſerving you from danger, but giving you every thing which you ſtand in need of; this the moſt tender parent, were he ever ſo willing, has not in his power to do. I am ſure you would not be ſo ungrateful as to forget, or not to acknowledge the kindneſs of your father and mother, little as they are able to do for you; it would therefore be the higheſt ingratitude in you not to remember the benefits you receive from Almighty GOD, who created you and all the world.

Whenever you think on the goodneſs of GOD, you muſt call to mind what he has required of you, in return for all the numberleſs bleſſings he has beſtowed on you. One would naturally conclude that it would be ſomething on your parts, which would be attended with no ſmall difficulty; but how kind, good, and gracious, is your Heavenly Father, for he only requires of you that *you do juſtly*; that is, rendering to all their dues, and injuring no one in body, ſoul, goods, or fame;—that *you love mercy*; that is, not only extending relief to the neceſſitous, and pardoning every offence, but

delighting

delighting to be employed in doing good; — and that *you walk humbly with God.* Walking humbly with God, is to be conſcious of the imperfection of our beſt ſervices, to be ſubmiſſive to his government, and reſigned to his providence.

God is not to be neglected or diſobeyed, becauſe he is kind and merciful. You have his laws in the Ten Commandments literally; you are further inſtructed in them ſpiritually in the New Teſtament, as interpreted by Jesus Christ *, who came down from heaven to ſave mankind from everlaſting deſtruction. You are there informed of the terms on which ſalvation is promiſed.

To remember, therefore, your Creator as you ought, you muſt call to mind your duty to him, which you are taught in your Catechiſm. To *believe* in him, is to acknowledge him to be the Creator of all things in heaven and on earth; to *fear* him, is to be fearful of offending him, not only becauſe he can puniſh you for diſobeying his commandments, but alſo on account of his great kindneſs to you; to *love* him for preſerving you from all dangers; and as to him you owe your being, your preſervation, and all the bleſſings you now enjoy, and will hereafter enjoy, if (as our Church Catechiſm expreſſes it) "you put your whole truſt "in him, call upon him in prayer, honour his "holy name and his word, and ſerve him truly "all the days of your life."

* Matth. chap. vi.

I ſhall next inform you (as I promiſed) why you are particularly exhorted to remember your Creator in the days of your youth.

Young as you are, my little hearers, you muſt have obſerved, when any one wants a plant or flower to grow in any particular manner, he always trains it when it is young, well knowing the great difficulty, if not the impoſſibility, of doing it when older.—You know you can twiſt a twig round your hand, but when it is grown older, and becomes firm and hard, you cannot bend it with all your ſtrength. Children in the ſame manner, muſt be inſtructed when young, for at that tender age they will receive inſtruction with more eaſe; and remember it longer; for (as Solomon in his Book of Proverbs has remarked) "train up a child in the way that he ſhould go, "and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Many of you have not been long in the Sunday Schools, yet how different do you in general appear and act from thoſe children whoſe parents have unkindly refuſed to let them receive the benefit of them. You are cleanly, decent in your behaviour, know your duty to GOD and your neighbour, and are become induſtrious; whilſt theſe poor children, who have never had the advantage of a Sunday School, are running about the ſtreets even on Sunday, in dirt and rags, quite unacquainted with their duty to GOD or their neighbour, are idle, take GOD's name in vain, are abuſive,

abuſive, and either beg or ſteal to keep themſelves from ſtarving. When you obſerve this difference in them and yourſelves, do not, my young friends, deſpiſe them, but pity them, and pray for them; for it is not their faults, but that of their parents, who have refuſed to have them religiouſly inſtructed. Some of thoſe poor unfortunate children have been taken into the Sunday Schools after having been long uſed to bad habits, and you muſt have obſerved how difficult a taſk it has been to teach *them*, to what it was to teach *you* who came to theſe Schools early in life.

You alſo have ſeen ſeveral of your ſchool-fellows, after having left the Schools, come of their own accord on a Sunday to their old School, and alſo attend you to church on Sunday evenings, and are eſteemed by all who know them; this is the conſequence of being early inſtructed in their duty.

As ſuch inſtitutions have proved a bleſſing to many whom you know, as well as to yourſelves, I moſt earneſtly intreat you to remember theſe great advantages, and continue daily to offer up your thanks to Almighty GOD, not only whilſt you are in the Schools, but when you leave them; recollect that from thoſe to whom much is given, much is required; and by being exemplary in your conduct, (that is, ſetting a good example to other children) you will ſhew your gratitude to your benefactors, and may be the means of cauſing other children to receive the ſame education as yourſelves; and

ſhould it pleaſe GOD to preſerve your lives, till you yourſelves become fathers and mothers, you will undoubtedly put your children to the Sunday Schools, ſo that they may receive from them the ſame benefits as you have done; and you yourſelves will convince them, that the beſt advice you can give them will be "TO REMEMBER THEIR "CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF THEIR YOUTH."

ON GOOD-FRIDAY.

JOHN xix. 16.

THEN PILATE DELIVERED HIM TO THEM TO BE CRUCIFIED.

THIS day was obſerved by the firſt Chriſtians with the ſtricteſt faſting and humiliation, from a ſenſe of the ſins of mankind, for which no atonement could be made, but that of the death of CHRIST. Why this day is called *Good Friday* is not well known, but it is by many ſuppoſed to ariſe from the great good that the Death of CHRIST produced to mankind;*—the forgiveneſs of their ſins, the redemption of their ſouls, the reſurrection of the body, and a life everlaſting.

* Mr. NELSON ſays, "it was from the bleſſed *effects* of our Saviour's ſufferings, which are the ground of all our joy; and from thoſe unſpeakable good things which he hath purchaſed for us by his death, whereby the bleſſed JESUS made expiation for the ſins of the whole world, *and by the ſhedding of his own blood obtained eternal redemption for us.*—Heb. ix. 12.

Some

Some years ago this day was not ſo ſtrictly obſerved as it is at preſent; but Dr. PORTEUS, the preſent Biſhop of London, wrote a very ſenſible and affecting Exhortation for the proper obſervance of this day,† which had a very good effect, at leaſt to outward appearances; the ſhops being now ſhut as on Sundays, and the Service of the Church better attended, and you regularly hear a diſcourſe on this ſolemn event in the evening at Church. But to hear without underſtanding, to underſtand and not to give attention or regard, is what I moſt earneſtly wiſh to remove. I will therefore endeavour to explain this great event in ſuch a manner as to be underſtood by you; and to make ſo deep and laſting an impreſſion on your minds, that you may live like thoſe who are ſenſible of the ſufferings of CHRIST, and the great benefits they have received by his death.

In the proper Pſalms, and Leſſons taken out of the Old Teſtament, you have this day heard the ſufferings of our bleſſed Lord foretold, but particularly in the fifty-third chapter of the Prophet Iſaiah. He is there repreſented as one "deſpiſ-
"ed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows and
"acquainted with grief; he was wounded for our
"tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniqui-
"ties, the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon
"him, and with his ſtripes we are healed. All

† See this little Tract, printed for Rivington, St. Paul's Church-yard, and ſold for 3d.

" we like ſheep have gone aſtray, we have turned
" every one to his own way, and the Lord hath
" laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was op-
" preſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened
" not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the
" ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before his ſhearers is
" dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth. He was
" cut off out of the land of the living; for the tranſ-
" greſſion of my people was he ſtricken. He had
" done no violence, neither was any deceit found
" in his mouth. He bare the ſins of many, and
" made interceſſion for the tranſgreſſors."

In the Epiſtle of this day, St. Paul clearly proves, that CHRIST was the perſon foretold, who was to be a ſacrifice for the ſins of mankind; and in the Goſpel of St. John, the ſufferings, crucifixion and death of CHRIST are related. Theſe chapters are frequently read by you or to you, but how ſeldom and by how few are they attended to ſeriouſly! Is this not a matter of great ſurpriſe?

Were you informed of any prince laying down his life to reconcile the King his father to his ſubjects, who had diſobeyed his laws, and had rebelled againſt him, and that this Prince was put to death in the moſt painful manner, that of being crucified; a death inflicted on the vileſt of malefactors, and done in the following manner: They were ſtripped, then faſtened to a croſs, the arms extended, and a large nail driven through the palms of each hand and through each foot, and

there

there remained for many hours in the greateſt torture. Think, only think, my dear young friends, that you behold this Prince ſuffering this death, to ſave the lives of diſobedient and rebellious ſubjects, and I am ſure you will ſincerely pity him, and be grieved to think that ſo kind, gracious, and good a Prince ſhould thus ſuffer.

If then you, and even many others who have received what is called a good education, cannot hear ſuch an account of an earthly prince, without being grievouſly affected, how ſhameful muſt it then be, for you and them to read the hiſtory of the ſufferings and death of CHRIST, without feeling or ſhewing the leaſt concern! For whom did he ſuffer deriſion, ſcorn, inſult, ſtripes, crucifixion, and at laſt the moſt painful and ſhameful death? was it not for us, and for our ſalvation, that he came down from heaven to undergo all theſe ſufferings; and ſhall we then be ſo ungrateful to this kind, good, and generous friend, as to let this day paſs unnoticed by us, and hear an account of his death, without being the leaſt affected? Forbid it Heaven, forbid it gratitude! On the contrary, may you, my young friends, on the yearly return of this day BE SERIOUS; * reflect on what you have read and heard of the tranſactions of this ſolemn day,

* When that eminent Chriſtian the learned GROTIUS lay on his death-bed, an intimate friend deſired that in his great wiſdom he would give him ſome advice how he might ſo live, as to ſecure future happineſs; to whom GROTIUS only ſaid, "BE SERIOUS."

and

and remember you are Chriſtians. You will then act as becomes the ſervants of ſo good a maſter, and after death you will be received by him into the kingdom he has prepared for all thoſe who believe on him, and truſt on his merits, and not their own, for a joyful reſurrection.

EPHES. iv. 10.

HE THAT DESCENDED, IS THE SAME ALSO THAT ASCENDED UP FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS, THAT HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS.

HAVING explained to you on *Good-Friday* the death of JESUS CHRIST, and in what manner you were to paſs that day, I ſhall now ſpeak to you on his aſcenſion into heaven.

In the Old Teſtament we read that Enoch and Elijah were taken up into heaven, and of thoſe who were raiſed from the dead; and in the New Teſtament of others who were again reſtored to life by our Bleſſed Lord, and his diſciples; but we have no account of any other perſon's being dead and buried, riſing again, and aſcending into heaven, but that of CHRIST, and theſe circumſtances fully proved him to be the true Meſſiah. Though we never can be ſufficiently thankful to our bleſſed Lord, for coming down from heaven, taking our nature upon him, and ſuffering death, that we might

receive

receive pardon of our ſins; yet his reſurrection and aſcenſion are of ſtill greater conſequence to us, and ſhew his unexampled goodneſs and power. To have been freed from puniſhment through the death of CHRIST, certainly demands our moſt grateful acknowledgements; but in addition to this favour, to be promiſed, that if we truly repent us of our ſins, and lead a new life, that we ſhould not only receive forgiveneſs, but through him alſo receive an everlaſting life of happineſs, and be admitted into the preſence of Almighty GOD, *his* Father and *our* Father, and reſide with the angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect: This is a bleſſing that ſurpaſſes all human underſtanding, and no words can expreſs our gratitude ſo well as thoſe in our liturgy: "We bleſs thee for our creation, "preſervation, and all the bleſſings of this life; "but above all, for thine ineſtimable love *in the* "*redemption of the world by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*"

As I am ſure you would on no account loſe ſo great a bleſſing, let me remind you of what you may do to forfeit it, and what you muſt do to enjoy it. CHRIST himſelf has aſſured you that he came on earth not to deſtroy the law, but to fulfil it; you therefore muſt take care not to act contrary to that law.

You are continually inſtructed in the Catechiſm, and the greater part of you can repeat it, by which you are well acquainted with the Ten Commandments:—

In

In the *First* you are ordered to put your truſt in GOD alone. If you truſt to your parents and friends for what you want, without praying to GOD for it, you will break this commandment.

The *Second* forbids your paying adoration to any other than GOD himſelf; now by neglecting to worſhip him properly, ſuffering your thoughts to be entirely employed with what you ſhall eat, what you ſhall drink, wherewithal you ſhall be clothed, ſpending your time idly, and not having the fear of GOD before your eyes, you break this law.

The *Third* I hope you never have, nor ever will intentionally be guilty of breaking; for taking the name of the LORD in vain, is a ſin which you can have no inducement to commit; and GOD himſelf ſays, if you take his name in vain he will not hold you guiltleſs. You muſt not, even in common diſcourſe, ſay *O God*, *O Lord*, or *Lord have mercy upon me*.

The *Fourth*. If you neglect to attend the publick worſhip of GOD on Sunday, employ your time on that day in work, amuſements, or idleneſs, you certainly do not keep the day holy, and therefore will be a Sabbath-breaker. As you are Sunday-School Scholars, you will be the more unpardonable, if, when you are grown up, you ſhould be Sabbath-breakers. It is a ſin that has brought many poor creatures to an untimely and ſhameful death, which they have frequently acknowledged at the gallows. Although it is a day of reſt from labour, unleſs you

employ

employ it in attending divine ſervice, and reading the ſcriptures at home, you will be the more liable to keep bad company, and be tempted to do evil.

Theſe firſt four commandments contain your duty towards GOD; and whoever diſobeys them, and does not ſincerely repent of it, will loſe thoſe great bleſſings promiſed to them in the Goſpel.

By the *Fifth* commandment, you are enjoined to behave with duty, reſpect, and obedience to your parents; and not only to them, but to your ſuperiors, particularly to your ſpiritual teachers, who are the Miniſters of the Goſpel, and to all who have any authority over you. If you refuſe or neglect to treat *them* with reſpect whom *you ſee daily*, or diſobey them, how can it be expected that you will ever pay that regard to GOD, whom you have not ſeen. On the obſervance of this commandment much depends; for without ſubordination and humility in children, all order is deſtroyed.

The *Sixth*. "Thou ſhalt do no murder." This is a moſt henious ſin indeed, but whilſt you are young, there is no great danger of your commiting it; though it is neceſſary to remind you of it, that as you grow in years, you may ſee the danger of it. To avoid your being guilty of it, you muſt forbear uſing inſulting or injurious language, giving way to anger, malice, or envy. Murder is in general conſidered the taking away the life of a fellow-creature; but the deſtroying ourſelves is undoubtedly murder, and of the worſt kind, be-

cauſe

cauſe a man may live to repent of any other, but the ſelf-murderer ruſhes into the preſence of his offended GOD without repentance; and ſuch as are known to have deſtroyed themſelves are not allowed chriſtian burial, for they are not conſidered as Chriſtians, and are therefore put into the earth where croſs roads meet, and a ſtake driven through the body, to warn others from acting in the ſame manner. To kill any animal maliciouſly or wantonly, is a very great crime; for GOD made them, and gave them life, therefore in taking it away in ſuch a manner, is an offence to GOD, and will not go unpuniſhed by him.

The *Seventh* commandment is particularly directed to thoſe of riper years than you are, but it is not too ſoon to imprint on your minds the dangerous conſequence of this horrible vice, and what it is. When you arrive at a proper age, many of you will undoubtedly enter into the holy ſtate of matrimony; which is a ſolemn agreement made between one man and one woman to live together in the fear of GOD all the days of their lives, till death do them part: to have a ſincere affection for each other, and they are to contribute all in their power to their mutual ſupport. If, inſtead of ſo doing, the man quits his wife for another woman, or the woman leaves her huſband for another man, this is committing adultery, and the conſequences are very fatal and bad to themſelves and to ſociety. By adultery all domeſtick happineſs is deſtroyed,

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the children (if they have any) are neglected, and inſtead of being uſeful ſubjects, become burthens to the pariſh they are born in, and unleſs they are taken into the Sunday Schools, are in general brought up without any knowledge of Chriſtianity; this, therefore, is a grievous ſin.

The *Eighth* Commandment not only forbids the taking away by force or ſecretly, what belongs to another; the taking of flax, wool, or worſted, from each other, or waſting it,* is alſo an act of injuſtice, and may teach you to become thieves. Should you in future be ſervants, you muſt on no account waſte, deſtroy, or give away what is entruſted to your care, or even connive at others doing it. You muſt not idle away your time when at home, or loiter it away when abroad, becauſe your maſters and miſtreſſes have agreed to give you wages for your labour and time; if you receive the one, you muſt comply with the other, or elſe you will be guilty of a fraud.

Speaking evil of any one is robbing them of their good name, which is the worſt of all theſts, becauſe you may never have it in your power to reſtore it; beſides, you do an injury to another, without doing any good to yourſelves; which is acting like Satan, the great enemy of mankind.

Should you ever enter into any kind of trade, take care never to impoſe on thoſe with whom you deal; for this alſo may juſtly be conſidered as theft.

* As the children in the School of Induſtry ſpin wool and flax, this caution is more particularly directed to them.

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In fact, if you would but follow the *Golden Rule* to do unto others as you would they ſhould do unto you, you will never be guilty of ſtealing in any ſenſe of the word, or in any degree whatever.

The *Ninth*. This means taking a falſe oath to the prejudice of any one. You are at preſent too young to have your oath taken as a witneſs, but you may do no ſmall injury to the character of your ſchool-fellows, or others of whom you ſpeak untruth. To accuſe them of doing or ſaying any thing that is bad, to ſave yourſelf from ſhame or puniſhment, or maliciouſly to have them puniſhed, is a very wicked act, and leads to worſe;—becauſe, ſhould you not heſitate to do ſuch things whilſt you are young, you may be led when you are older to be guilty of perjury, by which you will be liable to ſuffer a ſhameful death.

The *Tenth*. This commandment is, I fear, very often broken, not only by ſuch children as you are, but by thoſe who are older, and have had good educations. To be unhappy and diſcontented with your ſituation in life, and to envy thoſe who are richer or in a higher ſtation of life than yourſelves, is in general to deſire to have what belongs to them. This can do you no good, but on the contrary much harm; it brings on a diſcontented mind, which is one of the greateſt evils that can befal you; for let your ſituation be ever ſo great, you will not be able to reliſh any degree of happineſs, if any one has a greater fortune than yourſelf.

yourſelf. Beſides, to covet other men's goods, may in time lead to theft, or even murder; and by breaking the tenth commandment, you may be brought to break the ſixth and eighth.

Theſe ſix commandments contain our duty towards our neighbour, and are explained by our Lord in his ſermon on the mount; whenever therefore, you have read or repeated by memory theſe commandments, always conclude with ſaying, "Lord "have mercy upon us, and write all theſe thy "laws in our hearts, we beſeech thee."

If you diſobey theſe commandments, the crucifixion and aſcenſion of CHRIST JESUS will be of very ſerious conſequence to you; for after death when you riſe from the grave, and appear at the judgment ſeat of CHRIST, you can have no excuſe for breaking theſe commandments, and you will therefore be liable to everlaſting puniſhment. But if, on the contrary, you have obſerved them, by doing your duty to GOD and your neighbour, as you are more particularly taught to do in your Catechiſm, you will be received by your bleſſed Lord and Saviour into his kingdom prepared for you. The happineſs you will for ever enjoy there will be ſuch as "the eye hath not ſeen, the ear heard, nor "hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."

ALMIGHTY Lord and everlaſting God, vouchſafe, we beſeech thee, to direct, ſanctify, and govern both our hearts and bodies in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that

through thy moſt mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preſerved in body and ſoul, through our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

On CLEANLINESS.

Isaiah i. 16.

WASH YE, MAKE YE CLEAN.

WASHING formed a chief ceremonial part of the religion of the Jews; they were not only enjoined to waſh their hands, face, and feet, every day, but even ſeveral times each day, and never went to the tabernacle without performing it. The waſhing of the body, and keeping it clean, was emblematical, that is deſigned to remind them of the purity or cleanneſs of the ſoul; nor could it be ſuppoſed that a Jew who neglected the duty of waſhing the body would take the trouble to purify the ſoul.

Amongſt us Chriſtians waſhing is not conſidered as an act of religion, except in baptiſm, which, in warm climates, is generally performed by dipping the perſon baptized in water, but in cold climates it would be dangerous to the health; therefore the child at baptiſm is ſprinkled with water, and this dipping or ſprinkling is conſidered, figuratively, as the waſhing away the ſtain contracted by us from our parents; for we by nature are born in ſin, but by baptiſm we are made the children of grace.

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It is become a proverb to ſay, *Cleanlineſs* is next to *Godlineſs*, and I am well convinced, that without cleanlineſs there will be no godlineſs; whoever are idle and careleſs of their perſons, are in general neglectful of all moral and chriſtian duties. In the whole courſe of my life I do not recollect ever having ſeen a dirty perſon attend any place of divine worſhip; being, I conclude, convinced that none but perſons of decent appearance ſhould enter there. Yet I have ſeen many very poor perſons at church, whoſe clothes, though mean and patched, were clean, they well knowing that GOD is no reſpecter of perſons, for though their outer garments may be mean, their ſouls may be clothed with righteouſneſs. Thus dirt and idleneſs deprive men of the greateſt honour and happineſs; for our Lord ſays, "where "two or three are gathered together in my name, "I am in the midſt of them."

I would by no means be underſtood to recommend to you, my young friends, any thing that borders on finery in dreſs, for your ſituation in life will not allow it; and ſhould you appear in any but a plain clean dreſs, your character would be in danger. The wages of honeſt induſtry are ſeldom laid out in gaudy apparel, but in the real neceſſaries and comforts of life: whereas the wages of ſin, theft, and proſtitution, are ſpent in fine gaudy dreſs and diſſipation.

Cleanlineſs can be preſerved at very little trouble or expence; to keep the body clean, a little ſoap and water is alone neceſſary, and by inſtantly mending your garments when any hole or rent appears, they will laſt the longer. Cleanlineſs is alſo a great preſerver of health; it is always ſure to meet with approbation, for whenever we ſee a poor but cleanly perſon, we are inclined to give our aſſiſtance, having great cauſe to believe it will not be thrown away; for we conclude they are induſtrious, and experience has convinced me of the truth of this ſuppoſition. That cleanlineſs proceeds in general from your own inclination, is evident from your preſent appearance; for it is not the children of the parents who earn moſt that are the moſt cleanly; very far from it,—for the greater part of you who are neat and clean, and in decent apparel, are the children of the pooreſt parents, which does you and them great credit, and are therefore more deſerving of aſſiſtance.

You children who are clothed by your benefactors ought more particularly to appear clean, for it would be very ungrateful and diſreſpectful in you to abuſe their kindneſs, by your neglecting to keep your clothes clean, or be dirty in your perſons; nor could you have any reaſon to expect any future favours from them after ſuch conduct. I have only to appeal to you who are now cleanly,

but

t were once dirty, whether you do not feel urſelves more comfortable in yourſelves, and ceive a pleaſure in being taken notice of by ur ſuperiors for your cleanlineſs.

In Sunday Schools, and Schools of Induſtry, oſe children who are cleanly are always ſure of eeting with the approbation of their viſitors, and all who ſee them, and are ſure of being reward-; whereas the dirty are beheld with diſguſt, and ery one is unwilling to come near them, even e children of the ſame ſchool. Cleanlineſs muſt ſo be obſerved in regard to your books and ork, for the firſt will be ſoon deſtroyed by dirty nds, and the other will never be worth ſo much if done clean.

To conclude; if you wiſh to be aſſiſted, or have y attention ſhewn to you, you muſt have parti-ular regard to cleanlineſs. *You* will receive great eneſit from it, and your benefactors will think emſelves ſufficiently repaid by the pleaſure they ill receive in ſeeing you pay a proper regard to eir kindneſs and attention. I moſt earneſtly in-eat you to waſh your hands, face, and mouth, and omb your hair every morning, and then offer up our prayers to Almighty GOD, and do the ſame very night before you go to bed. Be cleanly, ober, honeſt, induſtrious, and religious; you may hen be aſſured that through the merits of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, you will meet

with the bleſſing of GOD here on earth, and be received at your death into that kingdom prepared for all thoſe who are pure in heart.



ON THE

INSTITUTION

OF

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

WHEN Sunday Schools were firſt propoſed to the publick, they met, (as all plans generally do) with advocates and opponents; fortunately however for the inſtitution, among the former were Divines and Lawyers eminently diſtinguiſhed for their ſuperior learning, ſenſe and virtues.

Nevertheleſs, objections ſtill prevail; and as they are zealouſly circulated in the publick papers by thoſe who hold opinions unfavourable to the meaſure, it is neceſſary for its friends to have recourſe to ſimilar means for its juſtification.

The fact is, that the arguments made uſe of by the opponents of Sunday Schools, chiefly turn upon certain ſuppoſed inconveniencies which may *poſſibly* ariſe to ſociety from their continuance, without conſidering at the ſame time the more *probable* advantages which, as far as human reaſon may preſume to propheſy, cannot fail to reſult from the proper management of the inſtitution.

And already, indeed, Providence has been graciouſly pleaſed to give ſo evident a bleſſing on the endeavours of thoſe who conduct this extenſive charity, that I am able to appeal from imaginary miſchiefs to poſitive and perſonal experience of its publick utility.

Accordingly in the city of Bath, where I reſide, the ſame children who, before theſe ſchools were eſtabliſhed, were ſeen every Sunday rudely rioting in the ſtreets, and offending the inhabitants by their dirt and profaneneſs, are now collected every Sabbath in the different ſeminaries appointed for that purpoſe, in the different parts of the town, where they are obliged to appear clean, are taught to behave decently, and are inſtructed in the diſtinguiſhing principles of the Chriſtian Religion.

There is another advantage they derive from thus being regularly aſſembled together on a ſtated day in each week,—they become reconciled to confinement, and are habituated to behave with ſilence and reſpect in the preſence of their ſuperiors: for a certain number of reſpectable Ladies and Gentlemen have undertaken the exemplary office of being Viſitors of the ſeveral ſchools, and each takes one of them in particular as the object of her or his peculiar inſpection. By this means a degree of emulation is promoted among the children; and thoſe who appear to have profited moſt by the moral and religious inſtructions of

their

their teachers and visitors, are stimulated to persevere by suitable encouragements.

Their assembling at Church, for the religious purposes of the day, is evidently a pleasing duty to themselves, and also affords great satisfaction to all who behold them. I have often seen tears of sensibility shed, by Gentlemen as well as Ladies, at so pleasing and affecting a sight. The parents are also induced to attend divine service, from the heartfelt pleasure they receive in beholding their children attentively performing the devout exercises of the sacred place.

Add to this, that the presence of the Gentlemen of the Committee, together with the Visitors, and persons of rank and fortune, raises in the children and their parents a better opinion of themselves; impresses upon them a certain self-respect, which is one of the great guards of virtue; and being thus mingled in one common congregation with their protectors and superiors, they no longer entertain the dispiriting suspicion that they are a distinct and rejected class of beings, but stand in the same relation as the rest of mankind to the Universal Father of Heaven and Earth.

Thus Sunday Schools have brought together the several links of that great chain of society, which has too long been broken and separated; I mean that which has united the rich and the poor; thus strikingly exhibiting the reciprocal relation they stand in to each other. The rich are now better

acquainted

acquainted with the wants and diſtreſſes of the poor; they perceive that the vices of the loweſt orders are leſs owing to an innate depravity of nature, than to their having been totally deſtitute in their early years of every moral and religious inſtruction. The poor, on the other hand, ſtruck with this humane attention to them and their children, are ambitious to acquire the eſteem of their generous guardians and inſtructors; and knowing it can only be attained by a moral and religious merit, they become, from intereſt as well as principle, good Chriſtians, and uſeful members of ſociety.

The only material objections to Sunday Schools appear to me to be,

1ſt. That what the Children learn on one Sunday is forgotten by them before the next.

2dly. That teaching children to read will make them unwilling to enter into the lower occupations of life.

In anſwer to the firſt, I will take upon me to declare, that many children, who have had no other education than that which they received in the Sunday Schools, have been able in one year to read the Pſalter; and ſeveral children, not ſeven years of age, have repeated to me three Collects

lects in ſucceſſion. Others who would never have had any education from their parents, are now aſſiſted by them at their leiſure hours in their reſpective occupations.——The firſt great objection being thus removed,

To the ſecond I reply, that learning to read will not have the bad effect alledged; for ſhould the children have no other reaſon for not entering the lower occupations, but that of their being able to read, (which many thouſands in their line of life cannot) this cauſe will ſoon be removed by the inſtitution of Sunday Schools. As the greater part of the children in this kingdom will in a few years be able to read, and as it will then be conſidered a diſgrace to parents to have children of a proper age who cannot read, all will be induced to acquire this neceſſary branch of learning.

Now that this knowledge is not in fact detrimental to Society, cannot be more ſtrongly proved than by the behaviour of the loweſt among the natives of North-Britain, who are allowed by all who have any connection with them, to be an obedient, diligent, induſtrious, and frugal claſs of men, conſequently are better ſervants of every ſort; and whoever has had them under his command, as ſailors or ſoldiers, will do them the juſtice to declare, that they are governed with leſs trouble than any other ſet of people of this iſland.

When it is conſidered that we live in a free country, that the Scriptures are permitted to be

read

read by every one, is it not as great a degree of cruelty and arbitrary power, to deprive the poor of an opportunity of learning to read the Scriptures, as it is to prevent those from reading them who are able? Whoever has attentively observed the conduct of the lower classes of the people, must have taken notice, that on Sunday those who cannot read, devote the greatest part of the day to dangerous idleness, lounging, or gossipping; whereas those who can read will in general take up the Bible, and improve themselves;—but *when sickness, or the evening of life advances, great is the consolation to those who can read the Scriptures.*

Who then, in this country of liberty, would wish to withhold from a fellow subject and Christian, such a resource, pleasure, and comfort, merely because learning to read may possibly be attended with some small inconvenience to a particular part of society?

" Let them reflect, that there is no great or
" good design that may not have its inconveni-
" ence, and be embarrassed with doubts and hesi-
" tations. If we are never to push into action
" till the perplexities of speculative and timid
" men are entirely removed, nothing valuable
" can be attempted. What success may attend
" this institution, no one can say; the event must
" be committed into the hands of Divine Provi-
" dence. Some good cannot well avoid resulting
" from the trial, and at any rate, whoever en-
" deavours

" deavours to promote the Chriſtian Religion,
" will have the heartfelt ſatisfaction of having
" ſincerely attempted to promote the nobleſt in-
" tereſts of mankind, and the temporal and eter-
" nal happineſs of the riſing generation!"*

On the Viſitors every thing depends; and no one ſhould undertake that office, who is not reſolved to perſevere in it; it is an office that will give the higheſt ſatisfaction the human mind is capable of receiving. To inſtruct the ignorant, to promote the Chriſtian Religion, to aſſiſt real objects of charity, to comfort the afflicted, and viſit the ſick, are ſuch virtues, that he who practiſes them will not only be rewarded here, but hereafter. And when two or three hours each Sunday can produce ſo much happineſs, who that reflects would loſe ſuch real pleaſure? But it muſt not be forgotten, that this pleaſure is not to be obtained without ſome difficulties. The Viſitors have to combat and bear with the ignorance, ingratitude, and even rudeneſs of the parents, who are often blind to their own intereſt. In this country of civil liberty, we cannot compel people to do that which is even for their own advantage. *Perſuaſion* therefore is the only method, with a

* Theſe are the ſentiments of a learned and diſtinguiſhed character.

reſolution

reſolution never to be provoked to wrath. Pity muſt take place of anger; and the grand object had in view to reform the minds of the riſing generation make every impediment vaniſh. In fact,

" Who does the beſt his circumſtance allows,
" Does well, acts nobly:—Angels could no more."

No argument can ſo effectually prove the utility of viſitors, as the difference of attendance and behaviour of the children when they have viſitors, and when they have not, in this city. During the ſummer months, when ſeveral of the viſitors leave Bath, the ſchools decreaſe in number; it is therefore *moſt earneſtly recommended* to the viſitors to appoint aſſiſtants, and to every well-wiſher to the Sunday Schools to do every thing in their power to increaſe the number of Sunday ſcholars; the ignorance or diffidence of the poor frequently preventing the ſending their children, unleſs they are applied to, or their children recommended by perſons of character.



FINIS.

11.

ADMONITIONS

FOR

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THE Author hopes he ſhall not be thought to intrude on the clerical office, by the following publication. His view was, to furniſh the children of the Sunday-ſchool, in the pariſh where he reſides, with a few plain, practical leſſons, for them to read over in a winter's evening: but by no means to divert their attention from the better inſtructions they receive from the pulpit. And, though this work was deſigned principally for one pariſh, he flatters himſelf that, if approved, it may be of equal uſe in others.



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ADMONITION I.

3d Epiſtle of St. John, 4th verſe.

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

BY "Truth" is here meant the word of God: and to "walk in truth" ſignifies to live according to that word; to make the holy ſcripture the rule of our lives and actions. So to "walk with God," is the ſame as to obey God, or to keep his commandments:—to "walk uprightly," is to live honeſtly:—to "walk in love," is to live in brotherly love one with another, and to do all the good we can by acts of love and kindneſs:—to walk in Chriſt," or "in the light," is to follow Chriſt, or to govern our lives and conduct by the light of his goſpel; to imitate his example, and to obey his laws. And ſurely there can be no greater joy to parents, and to all who have the care of children, than to ſee them (as the text expreſſes it) "*walk* "*in truth*"—to find that the pains beſtowed upon them have not been beſtowed in vain; but that they have made a right uſe of the inſtructions they have received, by leading virtuous and good lives. This, my dear children, is the end and deſign of our taking you into this

ſchool; to train you up in the way of godlineſs, which is the way of happineſs; truſting in the bleſſing of God on our endeavours, that you may walk therein all the days of your life, and that as you grow in *age* you may "*grow in* "*grace.*"—Our firſt object was, to prevent your *doing evil*; our next is, to teach you to do well. Ignorance and idleneſs are the never-failing ſources of wickedneſs and miſery. Ignorance of religion, and of our duty, is the worſt ſort of ignorance: and idleneſs on the Lord's day is the worſt ſort of idleneſs. The deſign of ſetting up theſe ſchools was to prevent or remove thoſe dreadful evils, by inſtructing you in religious knowledge, and by keeping you well employed on the day ſet apart for religious exerciſes. We ſaw, with great concern, a number of children in this pariſh, loitering about on Sundays, inſtead of going to church, and doing their duty;—ſome playing—others talking idly, or worſe than idly. We now ſee them decent and orderly: reading their bibles, and other good books; and attending at church regularly twice a day. Thoſe who once knew nothing of God and their duty, now know both, by being inſtructed in the holy ſcriptures, which alone will "make them wiſe unto ſalvation." What an happy change! How pleaſing muſt it be to your parents! and how peculiarly ſo to us your inſtructors, to ſee you thus walk in the knowledge and practice of religious truth. But remember that this is only the beginning of a good work. You are now but juſt ſetting out in the way wherein you ſhould go. It is a good thing to *begin* well:

but

but the great matter is, to *go on* ſo;—to continue improving in knowledge and goodneſs;—to be diligent and conſtant in the performance of your ſeveral duties;—not only to ſpend the *Sabbath* day well, but to ſpend *every* day well;—to pray to God every day of your lives for his help and protection, and to thank him moſt humbly and heartily for his bleſſings already vouchſafed to you;—to be always well employed;—to make yourſelves as uſeful as you can to your parents, and all your other relations and friends;—and to ſhew your gratitude to us, by making a good uſe of the benefits you have received from us in this place of religious inſtruction. This is the return we expect and deſire, for the time, and money, and labour, we have beſtowed upon you; and great will be our joy and comfort if we receive it. We are pleaſed indeed with thinking that we have done *our* duty, by putting you in the way of doing *your's*: but it will be a ſad diſappointment and grief to us, if you fail on your part, and we find that we have been labouring in vain. Our aim is to make you happy: your endeavour muſt be to make yourſelves ſo; as you certainly may, if you will. Conſider often and ſeriouſly the great advantages you enjoy, and remember what our bleſſed Saviour declares, that "to whom much is given, of them ſhall much be required." The more has been done for you, the more you muſt do for yourſelves: the more good ſeed has been ſown in your hearts, the more good fruit you muſt bring forth in your lives and converſations. And

great will be your reward, both in this life and the next, for ſo doing: in this world, you will have peace of mind and a good conſcience, the beſt of all earthly bleſſings; and in the world to come, joy and happineſs for ever and ever.—To help you forward in the way of ſalvation (beſides our conſtant prayers to God, and the regular inſtructions in the ſchool), I have drawn up ſome ſhort and eaſy leſſons, in the form of Admonitions, for your reading at home; and that they may anſwer the good end propoſed by them, I muſt beg you to look them over very carefully, and think of them often. And above all, I charge you to pray earneſtly to Almighty God, that he will give you underſtanding to know, and grace to perform, your duty; that he will keep you ſtedfaſt and unmoveable in the truth of the goſpel; that ſo both you and we may REJOICE EVERMORE IN THE LORD.

ADMONITION II.

PROVERBS iii. 17.

Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs.

WHOSE ways? you will naturally aſk: for you muſt certainly deſire to find them out: and when you have found them, to walk in thoſe ways all the days of your life. Conſult your bible, and there you will find the true anſwer—Solomon will ſhew you this moſt "excellent way."

In the 13th verſe of the chapter from which my text is taken, you will read theſe words: "Happy

" Happy is the man that findeth WISDOM, and the man that getteth UNDERSTANDING." Now if you want to know what is meant by wiſdom and underſtanding, look again into your bible, Job xxviii. 28. and there you will find, that " the fear of the Lord, *that* is wiſdom; and to depart from evil, is underſtanding:" ſo that wiſdom, in ſcripture language, ſignifies religion, or godlineſs. And of *this* it is that Solomon ſpeaks, when he ſays, " Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs"—and, " all the things thou canſt deſire are not to be compared unto her." St. Paul in like manner aſſures us, that " godlineſs is profitable unto *all things*:" that is, it has *every* real advantage attending it; " having the promiſe of the life that *now is*," as well as " of that which *is to come*." Now one of the good things of this life is pleaſure: it is what we all deſire and ſeek after; but what many miſs of, becauſe they look for it where it is not to be found. It is indeed to be found only in the way of godlineſs, or in a life of religion and virtue. This the ſcripture declares in the plaineſt manner, and this I hope to convince you of in the following diſcourſe. I will ſhew you, firſt, that religion gives us the greateſt of all pleaſures, which nothing elſe can give; and, ſecondly, that it heightens every other pleaſure: ſo that its ways may moſt properly and truly be called the WAYS OF PLEASANTNESS.

There is an old ſaying, and a very true one, that " a good conſcience is a continual feaſt." The meaning of it is, that a ſenſe or conſciouſneſs of doing our duty, or of leading a good and

religious life, gives conſtant pleaſure to the mind, which is the greateſt of all feaſts. Food to the *body* is pleaſant; but that is a ſhort pleaſure, and to be had only for a few minutes in the day. But food to the *mind* is laſting: a good conſcience is a *continual* pleaſure; that never ceaſes, and never cloys. The mind is always at work, and giving us either pleaſure or pain, according as we do well or ill. Conſcience is a voice within us, that will be heard, whether we will or no. It will accuſe us, and give us bitter pain and uneaſineſs, when we neglect or tranſgreſs our duty; and it will commend us, and give us great pleaſure and comfort, when we do right. We may fly from other people; but we cannot fly from ourſelves; we cannot fly from our own hearts; nor from God, who is every where preſent, who ſearcheth our hearts, who knoweth all our moſt ſecret thoughts and deſigns, as well as our outward actions. It is he that pours joy and comfort into the heart that is pure and holy, and bitter ſorrow and anguiſh into that which is impure and ſinful: "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." Take notice of theſe words,—"then have we confidence towards God:" that is, if our hearts aſſure us that we do our duty, and live as we ought to do, then we may be aſſured of God's love and favour—we may draw near to him in prayer with humble confidence;—we may be certain of being rewarded by him both in this world and the

the next. And, let me aſk you, Is not this pleaſure? is it not the greateſt of all pleaſures, to feel our minds eaſy and happy, and to know that we are in favour with God, who is the author and giver of all goodneſs! And it is a pleaſure we may all have, if we will;—high and low, rich and poor, all are alike capable of being good, and conſequently of being happy.—Next to the pleaſure of a good conſcience, and being in favour with God, is that of being in favour with worthy and good men: and this pleaſure you are ſure to have by the ſame means; that is, by leading a religious and virtuous life.—Another pleaſure that I think you muſt feel is, that of making a proper return to us, who have taken pains to bring you into theſe good ways. You muſt ſurely be pleaſed by giving us pleaſure; which you may all do by behaving as you ought, and continuing ſteady in the performance of your duty. We can have no greater joy than to ſee and hear of our children "walking in truth."

I might mention other pleaſures in life, of a leſſer ſort and value; all which (ſuch, I mean, as are innocent) religion allows and approves of; and which without religion are indeed of no value, and can give us no true comfort and ſatisfaction. A diſtempered mind, like a diſtempered body, makes us incapable of every enjoyment. What pleaſure can the beſt food give to a ſick ſtomach? What joy can a perſon in pain receive from the moſt agreeable diverſion? Much leſs can an uneaſy mind (as every bad perſon's is) feel any pleaſure or com-

ſort from any, or all, of what are called the pleaſures of life. But a good conſcience gives a reliſh to every good thing beſides:—it enlivens every amuſement;—it cauſes a cheerful countenance as well as a merry heart.

I ſhall only make one obſervation at preſent upon what has been diſcourſed to you, which I wiſh to impreſs deeply on your minds. How good and kind is God, to make our duty and pleaſure thus go hand in hand! ſo that by following the one we are ſure to obtain the other. To make the ſame road the "way of pleaſantneſs" in *this* life, and the way that leads to thoſe "pleaſures which are at his right hand for evermore" in the life to come.

ADMONITION III.

PROV. iii. 17.

Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs.

WHAT ſtrange and falſe notions do ſome people entertain of religion!—as if it was a dull and melancholy thing; an enemy to all pleaſure and cheerfulneſs: whereas it is in truth the great friend and promoter of both. Its "ways are ways of pleaſantneſs," ſays Solomon: and the Pſalmiſt tells us, that "the voice of joy and gladneſs is in the dwellings of the righteous"—that "the ſtatutes of the Lord rejoice the heart"—that God's "law is his delight." So again in the New Teſtament;—"His commandments are not grievous"—"The fruit of the Spirit is joy"—"Rejoice in

the Lord always," ſays St. Paul; "and again I ſay, Rejoice"—And in another place, "Rejoice evermore."

In my laſt diſcourſe I ſhewed you the pleaſures of religion in general. We will now conſider the ſeveral branches of it in particular; as it is divided into our duty towards God, our neighbour, and ourſelves; and we ſhall find, that its ways are, in every one of theſe, "ways of pleaſantneſs;" and that a good life is, in every reſpect, a joyful and an happy one.

To begin with our duty towards God.—Now if we truly and ſincerely believe in God; if we think of him as we ought; if we look up to him as our Maker, Preſerver, and Redeemer; as the Author and Giver of all good things; as our heavenly Father, in whom "we live, move, and have our being;" as "the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort:" what pleaſure, what joy, muſt we feel in ſuch thoughts and reflections!—Again: if we love him with all our hearts, and put our whole truſt in him; if we expreſs our love, and truſt, and thankfulneſs to him, in prayer and praiſe; if we worſhip him, and give him thanks, both in private and public: what delight and comfort muſt we receive from thus diſcharging our duty towards him! How pleaſantly, as well as profitably, is our time thus employed! On the Lord's day more particularly, what an honour and pleaſure is it to enter his courts, and join our prayers and thankſgivings in the congregation of the faithful! "I was glad," ſays David, "when they

ſaid

ſaid unto me, Let us go into the houſe of the Lord:"—And ſurely every ſincere Chriſtian muſt ſay and think the ſame; and "call the Sabbath a delight,"—a day of true pleaſure, as well as of religious exerciſe and improvement.—The laſt, but moſt material, part of our duty towards God is, "to ſerve him truly all the days of our life." And what a pleaſure muſt it be to ſerve ſo good and gracious a Maſter! to think that he will kindly accept our poor and imperfect ſervices; and to be aſſured, that he will reward them with peace of mind in this world, and with joy and happineſs unſpeakable in that which is to come.

Next to the love of God comes the love of our neighbour; which includes our whole duty towards him: for ſo we are told by St. Paul, that "he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law;" and that "it is briefly comprehended in this ſaying, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf." The meaning is, that love, if hearty and ſincere, will ſhew itſelf in our lives and actions, and put us upon doing every kind and good office in our power; upon diſcharging all the relative and ſocial duties of life. It will make us good parents and children, good neighbours, and good friends. It will keep us continually well employed, and endeavouring to make one another happy. And is not this, think you, the way of pleaſantneſs? a way that you would all wiſh to walk in? And let me tell you, for your comfort, that it is a way open to every body:—old and young, rich and poor, all may do their duty; all may be uſeful in life, all may

do *ſome* good; and therefore all may be happy. Other pleaſures are ſhort and uncertain; hard to come at, and often attended with pain and diſappointment; but the pleaſure of doing good is ſure and laſting; eaſy to be procured, and will never diſappoint us. To inſtruct the ignorant, to aſſiſt the helpleſs, to comfort the afflicted, to encourage one another to love and to good works; theſe are duties we may all perform, theſe are pleaſures we may all partake of.

Laſtly, the duties that more immediately reſpect ourſelves; ſuch as, ſoberneſs, temperance, and chaſtity; diligence and induſtry. Theſe are all productive of pleaſure and comfort. To be ſober, temperate, and chaſte, is the only way to be healthy; and health gives pleaſure. To be active and induſtrious, while it makes the body ſtrong and vigorous, makes the mind cheerful and pleaſant. The food we eat has a double reliſh, if earned by our own labour, and "the ſleep of the labouring man is ſweet." Even our play and diverſions require induſtry in working to make us enjoy them; I mean when they are uſed as a relief from toil and buſineſs, and not made our chief buſineſs and employment. In ſhort, there is no way of paſſing our lives comfortably, of enjoying health of body and peace of mind, but by "doing our duty in that ſtate of life to which it has pleaſed God to call us." You, my good children, have a great advantage in being thus early brought into the ways of religion and virtue; in being ſo ſoon taught your duty, and ſo frequently and earneſtly exhorted to practiſe it. You are but juſt entering into life:

you

you have much time before you: make the moſt of it: and if you continue, as you have begun, in the right way, happy will it be for you both in this world and the next. The farther you advance in the knowledge and practice of your duty, the more pleaſant and delightful you will find it. Remember you have a good and gracious God, whoſe laws are not grievous; and a merciful Saviour, whoſe "yoke is eaſy," and whoſe "burden is light:" who will ſafely guide all his faithful ſervants through this life; and will at laſt bring them to manſions of eternal joy and happineſs in the life to come.—— God grant we may all thus live and die in the Lord!

ADMONITION IV.

Eccles. xii. 1.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.

To "remember our Creator," ſignifies, to think of him; to meditate on his glorious nature and perfections; to conſider him as always preſent with us, and as the conſtant witneſs of all our thoughts, words, and actions. Thus Moſes ſays, in his exhortation to the Iſraelites, Deut. viii. 18. "Thou ſhalt *remember* the Lord thy God." And the pious Pſalmiſt, to the ſame purpoſe, declares, "I have ſet the Lord always before me." And again: "I will

remember

remember the works of the Lord." And in another pſalm: "I have *remembered* thy name, O Lord; and HAVE KEPT THY LAW." Which laſt expreſſion leads me to obſerve, that to remember God, in the text and elſewhere, ſignifies, not barely to think of him, but to remember him *practically*; that is, ſo to think of him as to ſerve and obey him: For "the mercy of the Lord" (as David ſays in the ciiid Pſalm) "is upon them that fear him; to ſuch as keep his covenant, and to thoſe that REMEMBER HIS COMMANDMENTS TO DO THEM."

But to proceed with my text. You are told to remember God NOW; for the *preſent* is the only time you are ſure of: "Now is the accepted time, NOW is the day of ſalvation." You are therefore to remember him "*now*, in the days of your youth:" for *now* you are moſt able to do it; *now*, in the time of your health and vigour, will your ſervices be moſt acceptable to God; *now* will they be the ſureſt evidence of your love and reverence towards him, and of your ſincere and hearty deſire to pleaſe him; *now*, too, they will be moſt uſeful and profitable to yourſelves. By an early piety and obedience, you will make the diſcharge of your duty eaſy and familiar to you, and lay a ſure foundation of future comfort and happineſs. By ſetting out at firſt "in the way wherein you ſhould go," you will be better able, and diſpoſed, by God's grace, to continue in it all the days of your life; and as you advance in years, to increaſe in virtue and godlineſs. You will find the ways of wiſdom, or religion, to be

"ways

"ways of pleaſantneſs," as well as of peace. By a grateful remembrance of the Author and Giver of all good things, you will have a double enjoyment of the bleſſings of life: and by a firm truſt in his mercy and goodneſs, you will bear the evils of it with patience and reſignation; "knowing that all things work together for good to them that love and obey him."—Theſe are the great advantages of remembering and ſerving God in your youth; "while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them:"—that is, before the approach of old age; which is in itſelf evil and burdenſome, but becomes far more grievous and terrible when loaded with the remembrance of paſt ſins, and embittered with the dreadful proſpect of death and judgment to come—when many pains and infirmities will naturally attend us, and when there can be no pleaſure or comfort but in a good conſcience and the recollection of a well-ſpent life. They who have been forgetful of God, and negligent of their duty, in their younger days (ſuppoſing they ſhould live to be old, and have a due ſenſe of their wickedneſs), will at beſt paſs the decline of life in continual ſhame and ſorrow. But ſhould they be cut off in the midſt of their evil courſes, or live till they are hardened in ſin, think only how dreadful muſt be the conſequence. In the grave there is no room for repentance or amendment: they that die in their ſins will infallibly riſe to condemnation and eternal miſery. And as to a death-bed repentance, beſides the extreme folly and preſumption

ſumption of truſting to what may never happen, I ſee no good grounds in ſcripture for ſuppoſing it will be accepted, ſo as to be available to ſalvation. The gracious promiſes of the goſpel are made to thoſe that lead good and holy lives, not to dying penitents. It is "by patient continuance in well doing" (that is, by a conſtant and perſevering courſe of good actions and good living), that we are taught to ſeek for, and aſſured that we ſhall obtain, "eternal life." Now the ſooner we enter on ſuch a courſe, the eaſier we ſhall find it, and the greater progreſs we ſhall make in it. On our firſt ſetting out in life, much, if not every thing, depends. Habits early contracted, whether good or bad, generally accompany us through life. Beſides, we are told, that God will "reward every man according to his deeds." The ſooner therefore we begin to work in his ſervice, the greater will be our reward in heaven. Let us then loſe no time; when, if well employed, it will turn to ſo good account. You, my good children, have been early trained up in the knowledge of God and of your duty. Be it your care and ſtudy to make the beſt uſe of theſe great privileges and benefits. Let the remembrance of your Creator be ever in your minds; let the fear and love of him be deeply impreſſed in your hearts; and let it be your earneſt and conſtant endeavour to ſerve and pleaſe him all the days of your life. "Worſhip the Lord with holy worſhip,"—pray to him daily for his grace and protection; praiſe him daily for his goodneſs and mercies. Remember that God is gracious, and will not for-

get

get your works done in obedience to his commands. "Be ye," therefore, "ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; foraſmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

ADMONITION V.

1 THESS. V. 17.

Pray without ceaſing.

WE have many exhortations to this purpoſe in St. Paul's epiſtles—to "*continue* in prayer"—to "*continue inſtant* in prayer"—"praying *always* with all prayer and ſupplication in the ſpirit"—"in *every* thing by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, to let our requeſts be made known unto God:"—and our bleſſed Saviour, we are told, "ſpake a parable" unto his diſciples, "to this end, that men ought *always* to pray, and not to faint." But we are not to ſuppoſe, by any of theſe expreſſions, that either Chriſt, or his apoſtle, meant that we ſhould be *always* actually employed in prayer; nor even that the *greateſt part* of our time ſhould be devoted to it. For this would be inconſiſtent with the common buſineſs and duties of life; which our holy religion requires us to attend to carefully, and to diſcharge with diligence and induſtry. What is the true meaning and intent of theſe, and the like, precepts, and particularly of that in the text, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you in the following diſcourſe.

Now to "pray without ceaſing," I apprehend, implies

implies these three things. First, that we should be regular and constant in our times and seasons of praying: secondly, that we should be earnest, and in some degree importunate, in it: and, lastly, that we should be always in a fit habit and disposition for it.—Order and regularity are necessary upon all occasions. No business can be done well, no duty can be properly performed, without them. And so it is in regard to prayer. If we have not stated and regular times for praying, we shall neglect, or forget it; and at last perhaps entirely lay it aside. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray," says the pious psalmist. And of Daniel, it is recorded, that he prayed constantly "three times a day." Twice a day, my good children, you should never fail offering up your prayers to God: in the morning, to thank him for preserving you through the night past, and to beg his blessing for the ensuing day; and in the evening to bless him for the mercies of the day, and to implore his protection for the following night. But on every Sunday, or Lord's day, a much larger portion of your time should be employed in prayer and devotion. The Almighty has graciously allowed you six days out of seven to work, and provide for the good things of this life. The seventh day he has consecrated for his worship and service. Remember that it is your bounden duty, as well as your interest, to set it apart for that purpose. Never fail, I charge you, to go to church twice a day: and always bear in mind the *end* of your going thither; namely, to worship God, and to be instructed in your duty.

You

You ſhould alſo ſpend ſome part of the day in reading good books at home, and thinking of what you have heard at church. A Sunday well employed will moſt likely enſure you an happy week.—Another particular implied in the text is, that we ſhould be earneſt, and in ſome ſort importunate, in our prayers. Not that you ſhould aim at any high flights or raptures of devotion (which is too often the caſe with hypocrites, and bad people) but the meaning is, that you ſhould keep your minds *intent* on what you are about; that you ſhould pray with your *hearts*, as well as with your lips. And if you are thus attentive and ſincere, you will naturally feel ſome degree of warmth and earneſtneſs in your addreſſes to the throne of grace. At leaſt, you will not "faint," as our Saviour expreſſes it; that is, you will not be cold and indifferent in your prayers. But, on the other hand, I muſt caution you againſt one fault, which is very common among children, and among ſome grown people; and that is, againſt ſpeaking with too loud a voice when you ſay your prayers. For this anſwers no good purpoſe. It rather hinders, than promotes, your own devotion; and it diſturbs that of others. Obſerve, I beg of you, the excellent direction given you in your common prayer book, to accompany the miniſter with "an *humble*," or *low* "voice," in ſuch parts of the ſervice as you are to repeat after him: and the ſame rule I would adviſe you to follow when you pray in private.

Laſtly; tho' we are not required to be always praying, yet we are required to be always in a

fit habit and diſpoſition for it. By which I mean, that we ſhould endeavour to preſerve a devout frame and temper of mind, and to live under a continual ſenſe of God's infinite power and goodneſs, and of our intire dependence on him, and obligations to him. Without ſuch a diſpoſition, our prayers are mere empty words; a mockery of God, inſtead of an acceptable ſervice to him. Above all, we muſt be careful to lead an holy and virtuous life, remembering what the wiſe man tells us, that "the ſacrifice of the *wicked* is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the *upright* is his delight." And to the ſame purpoſe we read in the New Teſtament, that "God heareth not ſinners: but if any man be a worſhipper of God, and doth his will, HIM HE HEARETH."

ADMONITION VI.

COLOSS. iii. 15.—latter part.

And be ye thankful.

THERE is no ſurer ſign of a good and well-diſpoſed heart than thankfulneſs, or gratitude. On the other hand, nothing ſhews a baſe and depraved one more than the want of thankfulneſs, or ingratitude. It was a common ſaying among the Romans, and a very true one, "Call a man ungrateful, and you call him every thing that is bad." And one of the wiſeſt writers among them obſerves, that "there is no bad quality but what dwells in the breaſt of the ungrateful." In ſcripture we find ingratitude make

make a part of the very worſt of characters. Thus St. Paul, ſpeaking of the ancient heathen world, ſays, that "when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, *neither were thankful.*" And in another epiſtle, foretelling the exceeding great wickedneſs of "the laſt days," among other inſtances of it, he ſays, that "men ſhall be *unthankful.*"

As Almighty God is the author and giver of all good things, of all that we enjoy here, or hope for hereafter; ſo he is, or ought to be, the firſt object of our gratitude. "Unto THEE, O GOD, do we give thanks: yea, unto THEE do we give thanks." To him it is, that we are commanded in the text to "be thankful:" and to him we are directed, throughout the bible, to offer up our tribute of praiſe and thankſgiving. "Be ye thankful," is the voice of nature, and the voice of God. The book of Pſalms is one continued leſſon, as well as example, of this duty. The pious effuſions of a grateful heart ſhine there in the moſt ſublime and animated language. From thence we may learn that thankſgiving is a moſt material and eſſential part of devotion; and that, in all our addreſſes to the throne of grace, we ſhould add praiſe to prayer. So we read of Daniel, a bright pattern of piety and holineſs, that "he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and *gave thanks* before his God, as he did aforetime;" that is, as it had been his conſtant practice. So again, we read in the Acts of the Apoſtles, that the firſt Chriſtians not only "continued ſtedfaſtly in the apoſtles' doctrine, and in prayers;"

but

but that they were "daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, *praising God.*" If we look into the epistles of St. Paul, we shall find him, like David, full of gratitude and thanksgiving; and continually exhorting others to follow his example. Thus he charges the Ephesians to be "giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." And to the Thessalonians he says, "In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." And again to the Hebrews, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually." For the due performance of this duty, I can give no instructions so good as what you may meet with in your common-prayer book. Look into that admirable form, called "the general thanksgiving," and there you will find for what, and in what manner, you are to thank "the father of all mercies." You are to thank him, most humbly and heartily, for all his goodness and loving kindness, both to you and to all men; for your "creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life," all which proceed from his bounty and goodness. But "above all" you are to thank him for his amazing and "inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ," the foundation of our pardon and salvation; "for the means of grace" here, and "for the hope of glory" hereafter, procured us by his merits and mediation. And, since we can discharge no part of our duty, nor consequently pay our debt of

gratitude to God, as we ought, without the assistance of his Holy Spirit; you must therefore beseech him to give you "such a due sense of all his mercies, that your hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that you may shew forth his praise, not only with your lips, but in your lives." Hence you are to learn, that without a sincere and thankful heart, and a good and holy life, all our praises and thanksgivings are of no value in the sight of God; they are mere empty words; nay worse, they are vile hypocrisy. And because it is only a steady, constant, uniform, and lasting obedience, that can shew the sincerity of our thankfulness, or make our praises acceptable unto God; you must pray that, by the help of his grace, you may "give up yourselves" *intirely* "to his service, and walk before him in holiness and righteousness *all your days*." If therefore you would fulfil the precept in the text, let a grateful sense of God's love and kindness dwell in your hearts continually. Let your lips speak the language of your hearts. And, above all, let your lives be answerable to both. Let them be one continued sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to him, in whom you "live, move, and have your being."

You must also remember to be thankful to man, as well as to God; first to your parents, whose love and care of you, you should endeavour to repay, as well as you can, by every act of dutiful attention; helping and supporting those in their old age, who have nursed and taken care of you in your infancy and youth.

You ſhould be thankful likewiſe to your friends and benefactors; particularly to thoſe who have watched over you in your tender years, and inſtructed you in the moſt uſeful of all knowledge, that of the holy ſcriptures; "which alone can make you wiſe unto ſalvation, thro' faith in Chriſt Jeſus." All the return we deſire is, that you will make a good uſe of our inſtructions. We have trained you up "in the way wherein you ſhould go." Be it your care, by the grace of God, "never to depart from it."

ADMONITION VII.

LUKE xi. 2.

When ye pray, ſay, Our Father, which art in Heaven.

MY deſign from theſe words, is not to explain to you the Lord's prayer; that is ſo well done already in the catechiſm, and the book of ſections, that I think it needleſs to add any thing upon the ſubject. But what I mean is, to ſhew you *what it is* to pray, and *how* to pray as you ought: and this with a particular view to the Lord's prayer, as being the beſt of all prayers, and what we are taught conſtantly to uſe, whenever we addreſs God, either in private or public. You may think perhaps that to *pray*, and to *ſay your prayers*, is one and the ſame thing; and that if you ſay them every morning and evening at home, and on Sundays when you go to church, you have done all that is required of you. But this, my dear children, is a great miſtake; for to *pray*, is an act of the mind or heart,

and may be done without opening our lips. On the other hand, barely to *say* one's prayers, is the work of the mouth; and if it does not come from the heart, is of no ſort of uſe whatever, nor can it properly be called *praying*. Inſtead of doing our duty to God in this reſpect, it is an affront and inſult offered him, if we pray with our lips, and not with our hearts. They ſhould indeed both go together; and when we lift up our minds to heaven, it is natural, and it is right, that we ſhould expreſs our thoughts and deſires in ſuitable words. For ſo our Saviour directs us—"WHEN YE PRAY, SAY," and then follows that excellent form of words, which he has graciouſly taught us, wherein to offer up our devotions properly and acceptably, at all times and on all occaſions. But how ſhould this prayer be ſaid? Surely with more than ordinary care and deliberation. Whereas the way in which it is commonly repeated, is, I am ſorry to obſerve, more haſty, and careleſs, and ſlovenly, than that of ſaying any other prayer whatever; without ſo much as the *appearance* of devotion, or even of attention. It is more like the chattering of parrots, than like a religious act of a rational creature. I do not ſpeak of you children in particular; but of the too general way of ſaying the Lord's prayer by people of every age, both in church and out. It is hurried over ſhamefully, as if it were a thing of courſe, a matter of mere form, not worth attending to. And I am ſure it never *can* be attended to in that manner of ſaying it. It certainly is not *praying*: it is rather a falſe ſhow, or an abuſe of prayer, a moving of the lips, without any motion of the heart.

heart. It is no better than a mockery of God, to whom the prayer is addreſſed; and an inſult on our Saviour, who taught us the uſe of it. And can you expect to be heard, or that your petitions will be granted, when offered up in ſo negligent and thoughtleſs a way? "Be not deceived: God is not to be mocked." He has a right to our utmoſt reverence and reſpect: to the ſervice of our hearts and ſouls; to our warmeſt love and adoration. He will not be put off with *lip-ſervice*, or with vain pretences of praying. Let me only aſk you one queſtion. Suppoſing you had a favour to beg of any of *us*; would you ſpeak to us in that haſty, careleſs way, in which you ſay the Lord's prayer? Would not you rather ſpeak ſlowly, handſomely, and reſpectfully? You *ought* ſo to do, and you certainly *would* do ſo, if you expected to have your requeſts granted. And would you treat God Almighty with leſs reſpect than you do one of your fellow creatures? Conſider, I intreat you, when you ſay the Lord's prayer, or any other, WHO it is you are ſpeaking to. It is to your great Creator, the Lord of heaven and earth, in whom you "live, move, and have your being:" on whom you intirely depend for life, and ſupport, and every thing;—to the God who, "heareth prayer:" who hears, and regards the ſincere and devout petitions of his faithful ſervants; but no other. Conſider alſo the *ſubject* of your prayers. It is to pray to him for all you want; to thank him for all you have; to beg his bleſſing on you both in this life, and in that which is to come. For HIS "is the kingdom, and the power, and

the glory, for ever and ever." And if you thus ſeriouſly conſider, *who* you are praying to, and *what* you are praying for, you cannot ſurely be at a loſs, *how* to pray. You muſt ſee the propriety, and abſolute neceſſity, of praying with cloſe attention and humble reverence and devotion; and of ſaying your prayers ſlowly, clearly, and deliberately. Never mind what others do; never follow bad examples. They will be no excuſe to you. By your *own* act, by your *own* praying, you will ſtand, or fall, in the ſight of God. It is not the length of a prayer, but the devotion and ſincerity of heart, with which it is put up, that he regards. Better ſay five words with your underſtanding and attention, than ten thouſand without. Even a *ſilent* prayer from the *heart* is better than the longeſt or fineſt compoſition, that proceeds only from the *mouth*. The Lord's prayer itſelf is in fact no prayer to him who uſes it improperly or indecently.

To conclude. What St. John ſays of the great duty of *love*, is equally applicable to that of *prayer*. "My little children, let us not *pray* in word, neither in tongue," *only*: "but in deed, and in truth." And that we may ſo pray, let us remember at all times, and in all places, that we are addreſſing ourſelves to God, who is every where preſent; on earth, as well as in heaven; and who has declared, that "them that honour him, he will honour; and that they that deſpiſe him, ſhall be lightly eſteemed." Let us therefore "give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: let us worſhip the Lord with holy worſhip."

ADMONITION VIII.

Exodus xx. 8.

Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.

The appointment of the ſabbath is as old as the creation; or rather, it immediately followed it. For ſo we read, in the 2d chapter of Geneſis; that as ſoon as "the heavens and the earth were finiſhed," God "bleſſed the ſeventh day, and ſanctified it." The word, "*ſabbath*," you are to obſerve, ſignifies *reſt*. And to "*ſanctify*," or "*hallow*," is to make *holy*; or to devote any thing to an holy uſe or purpoſe. So that the ſabbath, you ſee, is to be obſerved both as a day of reſt, and of worſhip. The very name implies the one; and the command, to keep it holy, expreſsly requires the other.—That we may obſerve it as we ought, let us inquire what is to be *done*, and what is to be left *undone*, on that ſacred day.

In general, it is to be devoted to the ſervice of Almighty God; to be employed in his worſhip, both in public and private. Our private devotions indeed ſhould never be omitted on any day; our public ones are required only on Sunday. We ſhould then go to church regularly twice a day; to pray to God, to praiſe and thank him for all his goodneſs; to hear his holy word; and to be inſtructed in our duty. Beſides this, we ſhould ſpend ſome part of the day in ſerious thought and meditation; in reading the bible, and other religious books. We ſhould conſider with ourſelves how we have employed

the week paſt; and if we recollect any faults we have committed, repent, and reſolve to avoid the like in future. We ſhould alſo take every opportunity of inſtructing the ignorant, and thoſe that are younger than ourſelves, in the principles and duties of religion. All offices of kindneſs and charity, ſuch as viſiting the ſick, relieving the needy, and comforting the afflicted, are particularly ſeaſonable on the Lord's day. By performing thoſe duties we may be ſaid, in a *double* ſenſe, to keep it holy. But we muſt abſtain from all labour and working, (except works of neceſſity and charity) in order to keep it as a day of reſt: and from all play and diverſions, in order to keep it as a day of holineſs. From ſin and wickedneſs of all ſorts we are indeed to refrain *every* day alike. Yet ſurely on this ſacred day ſin may be ſaid to be "exceeding" or *doubly* "ſinful;" as it is a proſtitution of the ſabbath, as well as an offence againſt the other laws of God. Drunkenneſs, for inſtance, is at *all* times a vice moſt ſhameful and abominable. On a *Sunday* it has the guilt of profaneneſs added to it. A Sunday ſpent idly, is generally ſpent wickedly. If not kept *holy*, it is commonly made more *unholy* than any other day of the week. And the reaſon is plain. Idleneſs naturally leads to vice and folly. He that is not well employed, will be ill employed. When work is laid aſide, and religious exerciſes neglected, time will not barely be loſt, but abuſed: and the ſin of *omiſſion* will be followed by ſins of *commiſſion*. Many that have ended their lives at the gallows have declared, that they began their wicked courſes,

by

by ſpending the Lord's day idly and profanely. What was intended for their good, has become by their abuſe of it, an occaſion of their falling into ſin and deſtruction.

How good and gracious is God in all his diſpenſations to man? His laws and commandments are not only "holy and juſt," but wiſely and mercifully deſigned for our benefit and happineſs. This, in particular, of obſerving the ſabbath, is evidently calculated for the eaſe and relief both of man and beaſt; as well as for our improvement in religious knowledge and practice. It is, if rightly underſtood, a delightful, as well as a profitable inſtitution. If our minds are well diſpoſed, we ſhall take pleaſure in every return of the Lord's day: we ſhall "enter into his courts with praiſe, and ſerve him with joy and gladneſs." We ſhall conſider it as the beginning of a good week to us; as inſuring God's bleſſing upon our labours and undertakings for the other ſix days. And we ſhall alſo look upon it (as we are directed to do in St. Paul's epiſtle to the Hebrews) as a pledge or earneſt of our *future* "reſt" in heaven; of that *eternal* ſabbath, which "remaineth to the people of God."

"Remember" therefore "the ſabbath-day, to keep it holy." When you have left this ſchool, recollect often how you paſſed it during your attendance here, and let it be an example for you to follow ever after. Never fail going to church: not as a matter of cuſtom, or form, or decency; but as it is your bounden duty, and your higheſt intereſt ſo to do. Go

thither, not to look about you, or to talk with your neighbours; but to worſhip God. Look only at your books, converſe only with your Maker. Be clean and decent in your dreſs; but think no farther about it. A pure heart, an humble and devout ſpirit, is the only ornament that God requires, and delights in.—Many of you, I obſerve it with pleaſure, are fond of pſalm-ſinging, and ſing well. By all means let me encourage you in it. It is a delightful, it is an heavenly, entertainment; as well as a material part of public worſhip. It is good at *all* times: on *Sundays* it is peculiarly ſo. Idle tattling and goſſiping is always bad: on Sundays in particular. But in an hour or two's friendly converſation, after the duty of the day is over, there is no harm.—I ſhall conclude with my hearty prayers to God (in which I hope you will all join me) that he will diſpoſe you ſo to paſs this and every day of your lives, that you may "apply your hearts unto wiſdom."

ADMONITION IX.

EXODUS XX. 13.

Thou ſhalt not kill.

OR, as we read in the prayer-book, "Thou ſhalt do no murder." A crime ſo heinous, ſo horrid, ſo truly diabolical, that nature ſhudders at the very thought of it. But beſides the actual commiſſion of murder, there are many ways by which you may be guilty, though in a leſſer degree, of the ſin here forbidden. Without

out taking away a man's life, you may injure him in his character; you may hurt his health; you may destroy his peace of mind; you may, by your ill treatment of him, shorten his days, or make them uncomfortable. And every offence of this kind is in fact a breach of the sixth commandment.

"Whosoever hateth his brother," says St. John, "is a murderer." As "*love* is the *fulfilling* of the law," *hatred*, of course, must be the *transgressing* of it; and particularly of this part of the law which forbids murder. All sin takes its rise from the heart: "Out of the heart," says our Saviour, "proceed MURDERS." So that if you bear malice or hatred in your heart, you are in the scripture sense guilty of murder. And it is plainly with a view to this commandment I am speaking of, that the catechism tells you, in the account of your duty towards your neighbour, that you must "bear no malice nor hatred in your heart." But indeed hatred seldom stops there; it generally proceeds to bad words and bad actions, which are great aggravations of the guilt of a bad heart. Accordingly, the catechism tells you, "to hurt nobody by word or deed." But you may think, perhaps, that mere words can hurt nobody; and that if you refrain from injurious actions, you may give a vent to your passion in *saying* what you please. Look into the 5th chapter of St. Matthew, and you will find a very different account of the matter. "Ye have heard," says our Saviour, "that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in dan-

ger of the judgment:" that is, the Jews conſidered only the ſtrict letter of the law, and taught that actual murder would expoſe a man to puniſhment. "But I ſay unto you," ſays Chriſt, "that whoſoever is angry with his brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the judgment: but whoſoever ſhall ſay, Thou fool, ſhall be in danger of hell-fire:" A plain proof, that by words, as well as actions, we may break the commandment, and be puniſhed for it everlaſtingly. God ſearcheth our hearts; and "there is not a word in our tongues, but thou, O Lord, knoweſt it altogether," and wilt moſt aſſuredly call us to account for it at the day of judgment.

There is one way in which the ſixth commandment is too often broken, which you may little think of, but which deſerves your moſt ſerious conſideration; I mean, by the bad behaviour of undutiful children towards their parents. This is ſometimes, in the ſtrict and literal ſenſe, committing murder. How many, alas! have by this means had their lives ſhortened, as well as made miſerable. To take away the life of thoſe who, under God, gave us life, is ſurely a ſin of the deepeſt dye; the moſt horrid ſpecies of murder. And believe me, every wicked and undutiful child is in ſome degree guilty of it. To break a parent's heart, is not only killing, but torturing; and in any way to give ſorrow or uneaſineſs to thoſe, whom it ſhould be our ſtudy to make eaſy and happy, is a double offence againſt God, as being a breach both of the fifth and ſixth commandment.

To

To conclude: Every wicked perſon, of what-ever age or ſtation he may be, is in ſome ſort a murderer; as he diſturbs the peace of ſociety, and leads others into ſin. In this reſpect he is truly a follower of the devil, who is ſaid to have been "a murderer from the beginning;" inaſmuch as he brought ſin and death into the world, and ſtill continues to deſtroy the ſouls of men by his temptations.—But "be ye followers of God, as dear children:" keeping his commandments, and walking in love; after the example of your bleſſed Maſter, who came into the world, "not to deſtroy men's lives, but to ſave them."

ADMONITION X.

EXODUS XX. 15.

Thou ſhalt not ſteal.

BESIDES the groſſer acts of theft or robbery, there are many leſſer ſorts of the ſame ſin forbidden by this commandment: ſuch as, fraud, or cheating, of every kind; neglecting to pay debts; taking advantage of other men's neceſſities; impoſing on their ignorance in matters of trade, or bargains; unfaithfulneſs to one's truſt; and, in ſhort, whatever is contrary to ſtrict honeſty and juſtice, and to that excellent rule of doing as one would be done by. And here it is neceſſary to caution young people in particular againſt the firſt beginnings of this ſin: againſt doing wrong in ſmaller matters; againſt pilfering, or cheating, in things of little

little value; leſt (as is generally the caſe) they go on from bad to worſe, and become at laſt hardened in wickedneſs. For in this, as in all other ſins, few people begin with the higheſt crimes, and few ſtop at the loweſt. One naturally leads to another, and ſo draws them on by degrees to death and deſtruction. Bad habits are ſeldom, if ever, got rid of; and none perhaps grows upon a man more than that of thieving, or diſhoneſty. He ſoon loſes his character; nobody will truſt or employ him; he knows not how to get a livelihood by fair means, and ſo has recourſe to the worſt; and moſt likely ends a miſerable life in priſon, or at the gallows. Or ſhould he eſcape puniſhment in this world, (which is very ſeldom the caſe), he is ſure to meet with it, in everlaſting miſery, in the world to come: for we are expreſsly told, that "thieves "ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God;" and that "the Lord is the avenger of all ſuch as go beyond and defraud their brother *in any matter*." Obſerve theſe laſt words; which ſhew that God will ſeverely puniſh not only the notorious thief and robber, but whoſoever is guilty of any fraud, or over-reaching, even in leſſer inſtances; "in any," and every, "matter," without exception. "Ye ſhall not ſteal, neither deal falſely, neither lie one to another. Thou ſhalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him." Levit. xix. 11—13. Remember alſo what our bleſſed Saviour ſays: "He that is faithful in that which is leaſt, is faithful alſo in much; and he that is unjuſt in the leaſt, is unjuſt alſo in much." Luke xvi. 10. Accuſtom

yourſelves

yourſelves therefore to be ſtrictly honeſt and juſt, and faithful to your truſt, in the moſt trifling concerns, and things of the ſmalleſt conſequence, that you may learn to be ſo in matters of greater importance: and be careful to avoid every act of thieving, or cheating, in the leaſt inſtances, leſt you get into bad habits, and commit greater crimes. Be aſſured, that for every tranſgreſſion of your duty you muſt be accountable to God. If you ſteal or cheat never ſo ſecretly, you cannot eſcape his notice and his puniſhment. He will not admit of any excuſes for fraud or diſhoneſty. You muſt not think to plead poverty, or hunger, or diſtreſs of any kind. Work for your livelihood, and honeſt induſtry will never fail to procure it. To eat the bread of idleneſs is bad, even when no diſhoneſt means are uſed to obtain it; but when idleneſs and thieving go together (as it commonly happens) the ſin is doubled, and great indeed is the guilt of the ſinner. But you may think perhaps, that if you take from another a ſmall pittance of what he has in great abundance, you do him no injury, and therefore there is no harm in it. Be not deceived: the ſin is the ſame in *you*, though the conſequence of it may not be ſo bad to *him*. Servants, in particular, are apt to take very improper liberties with what belongs to their maſters or miſtreſſes, under a falſe notion that they have a right to partake of it; or (what is ſtill worſe) give away a portion of it to others, becauſe they would be kind and generous. But this again is a *double* crime: it is adding breach of truſt to diſhoneſty. To give away what is

not

not your own to diſpoſe of, is not charity, but cheating, or rather downright injuſtice.

Borrowing, and not paying, is another way of breaking the commandment, too commonly practiſed by perſons of every age and condition; but not the leſs ſinful for being common. In this caſe, the borrower receives no laſting benefit; and the lender is hurt, and often ruined, by it. It is beſt, therefore, not to borrow at all. You will thereby keep clear of one ſort of diſhoneſty, and prevent much miſchief and diſtreſs both to yourſelf and others.

I cannot conclude this ſubject better, than by adviſing and exhorting you moſt earneſtly, in the words of the catechiſm, "not to covet, nor deſire, other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get your own living; and to do your duty in that ſtate of life unto which it ſhall pleaſe God to call you." Honeſty is the beſt policy: and "HE THAT WALKETH UPRIGHTLY WALKETH SURELY."

ADMONITION XI.

MATTHEW vii. 21.

Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

THIS declaration of our bleſſed Lord to his diſciples, is one of thoſe many paſſages of ſcripture, which ſhew the neceſſity of obedience

obedience to the will of God, in order to our ſalvation, or to our being admitted into the kingdom of heaven. They are ſo plain, that one would think it impoſſible to miſtake their meaning; or unneceſſary to do any thing more than barely to repeat them. For as the goſpel was to be "preached to the *poor*," ſo the moſt important parts of it are level to the loweſt capacity. He that *runneth* may read, and he that readeth may *underſtand*, all that is required of him to make him holy, and to make him happy. Yet, I know not how it happens, whether from careleſſneſs or perverſeneſs, or both; the plaineſt and moſt intereſting truths are ſometimes overlooked and diſregarded, and at other times miſtaken, or perverted. Even the doctrine in the text, though ſo often held forth, and ſo earneſtly inculcated, in the New Teſtament, has been ſtrangely paſſed over by ſome pretended preachers of the goſpel; and a ſhorter way to heaven has been pointed out by falſe guides, quite different from that ſhown us by Chriſt and his apoſtles. But, my "little children" (I ſpeak to you in the words of ſcripture) "let no man deceive you: he that *doeth* righteouſneſs, *is* righteous." And "without holineſs," or righteouſneſs, "no man ſhall ſee the Lord." "If thou wilt enter into life," ſays our Saviour, "KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS." And again: "Bleſſed are they that hear the word of God: and KEEP it." In like manner, ſays St. Paul: "God will render to every man ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: glory, honour, and peace" (that is, *eternal* glory and happineſs) "to every man that WORKETH GOOD." And in another

another epiſtle, "WORK OUT your own ſalvation." So alſo St. James: "Be ye DOERS of the word, and not hearers only," for "faith without works is dead." And St. John, in the Revelation: "Bleſſed are they that DO HIS COMMANDMENTS, that they may have right to the Tree of Life."—Theſe texts (to which many more might be added) are ſo exceedingly plain and clear, that you cannot fail, I think, to underſtand them. And the matter of them is ſo important, that they deſerve your utmoſt attention and conſtant remembrance. Conſider, I beſeech you, the end and deſign of Chriſt's coming into the world. It was, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar," or holy, "people, zealous of good works;" that, being fully inſtructed by him in the will of God, we "might ſerve him, in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the days of our life." "This is a faithful ſaying," ſays St. Paul, "that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners." Very true. But *how* did he ſave them? Not only by offering himſelf a ſacrifice for ſins paſt, but alſo by reforming, and leading them to obedience for the future; "teaching them, that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, they ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent world." "*This*," therefore (as the ſame apoſtle declares) is *likewiſe* "a faithful ſaying, that they which have *believed* in God might be careful to MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS; that is, to live ſuitably to their belief and profeſſion. Religion is an *active* ſervice. It is not enough, that it be rooted in the heart, and

and ſhew itſelf in outward profeſſions of faith and godlineſs: it muſt alſo bring forth the *fruit* of good works. Theſe are the only ſure evidences of it; and to theſe only are its rewards and promiſes annexed. To call Chriſt our Lord and Maſter, and not obey his commands, is no better than a mockery of him; an affront and inſult to him. *Practical* infidels (ſuch, I mean, as acknowledge Chriſt with their *mouths*, but in their *works* deny him) are the worſt of all infidels. We cannot plead ignorance of our duty; for he has fully and clearly revealed it to us. We cannot plead inability to perform it; for he has graciouſly promiſed the aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit to all that aſk for it. Tho' weak of ourſelves, we can "do all things," neceſſary to our ſalvation, "thro' Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth us." If therefore we fail in our duty, we are wholly without excuſe. In vain ſhall we cry, Lord, Lord, either here or hereafter, if we do not approve ourſelves his faithful and obedient ſervants. In vain ſhall we ſue for mercy, when he comes to judgment: when his anſwer will be, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

By what has been ſaid of the neceſſity of doing the will of God, in order to obtain the rewards of heaven, you are not to ſuppoſe that our good actions have any *merit* in them, or that we properly *deſerve* thoſe rewards.—No.—"Eternal life is the *gift*," the free undeſerved gift "of God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." It is his merits, and all-perfect obedience, that muſt recommend our imperfect ſervices to God.

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There is therefore no room "for boasting" on *our* part.—Far otherwise.—But if with faith and humility, we do the best we can to serve and please God, we may be sure that our services, however imperfect, will be accepted; and that, however undeserving, we shall not "lose our reward."

ADMONITION XII.

GALATIANS vi. 7—former part.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked.

ALAS! how liable are we to be deceived by others; and, what is still worse, how apt are we to deceive ourselves! This perhaps may seem strange; but it is too true, and too easily accounted for. Besides deceivers and enemies *without*; evil men and evil spirits, that are ever watching to seduce us; we have an enemy no less dangerous lurking *within*, that is continually ready to betray us. For "THE HEART," says the prophet, "IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Who can find out its dark windings and turnings; its secret arts and impositions; its deceitful workings; whereby we are continually in danger of being misled from our duty, and drawn into sin? Against every kind of deceit, whereby our salvation is endangered, we have frequent cautions and admonitions in the holy scriptures, and particularly in the epistles of St. Paul. In one place we read: "Let no man deceive you with vain words."

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In another; "Let no man deceive *himself*." In the text; "Be not deceived"—which may be underſtood as a warning againſt both kinds of deceit; from others as well as from ourſelves. The very ſame words are uſed by St. James, tho' differently tranſlated; where he ſays; "Do not *err*, my beloved brethren." For error will be the conſequence of deceit in either caſe; whether it proceed from within or without. After this general admonition, "Be not deceived;" it follows: "God is not mocked." As if the Apoſtle had ſaid; "Beware of being deceived, or of deceiving yourſelves. For tho' you may impoſe upon yourſelves, or upon one another, you cannot deceive or impoſe upon God." The very notion, the expreſſion, of mocking God, carries with it ſomething ſhocking and profane. And yet every wilful ſin is, in ſome ſort, an attempt to mock God; and every wilful ſinner is, in ſome ſenſe, guilty of this horrid blaſphemy. The language of his heart (if not of his mouth) is thus deſcribed by the Pſalmiſt; "How doth God know? is there knowledge in the Moſt High?" And again; "God hath forgotten: he hideth his face, he will never ſee it." Such is the folly and deceitfulneſs, of ſin; blinding the underſtanding, at the ſame time that it corrupts the heart. To ſuch falſe reaſonings, ſuch abſurd ſuppoſitions, is the ſinner driven. Various are the arts and deluſions, by which men impoſe upon themſelves, and upon one another. But the moſt general and common way is, by an imagination, that they may be ſaved, or go to heaven, without

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leading a good and holy life—than which nothing can be more directly contrary to the plain and conſtant doctrine of ſcripture, and particularly of the New Teſtament. Our Saviour ſays expreſsly; that "he only who doeth the will of God, ſhall enter into his heavenly kingdom"—that, if we will enter into life, we *muſt* "keep the commandments." The ſame important truth is continually held forth to us by his Apoſtles. "Whatſoever a man ſoweth," ſays St. Paul, "that ſhall he alſo reap"—"Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord."—It is as impoſſible to get to heaven without a life of good works, as it is to have a good crop of corn without ſowing good ſeed; or to "gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles."—Let no one therefore deceive you with vain pretences, and falſe hopes of ſalvation, contrary to the expreſs word of God.—Read your Bible; believe it; act according to it; and you cannot think or act amiſs. Does a Goſpel-preacher (as he falſely calls himſelf) tell you that faith alone will ſave you? that if you truſt to the merits of Chriſt, that will be ſufficient?—anſwer him, in the words of Scripture, that "faith without works is dead;" and that "by works a man is juſtified, and not by faith only."—Tell him, that you believe, and truſt, in the merits of your Saviour as firmly and ſincerely as he can do; but that, without an holy and good life on *your* part, thoſe merits will be of no avail to you: for that Chriſt "gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar" (or holy) "people, zealous of good works."

Again:

Again: Take great care that you be not deceived by idle and worthleſs companions, who will uſe all their arts and frauds to corrupt both your principles and manners.—Do not converſe with ſuch—turn away from them;—fly from them as you would from a plague, or other contagious diſtemper.—They are "fools," in Solomon's judgment, that "make a mock at ſin:" and they are *worſe* than fools, that would argue, or laugh, you out of your religion and virtue.

Laſtly: Beware of your own hearts;—never flatter yourſelves that you are in the way of ſalvation, while you are in the way of ſin or wickedneſs, and let me adviſe you often and fervently to pray in the words of David; "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts—and ſee if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting."

ADMONITION XIII.

PHILIPPIANS i. 27.

Let your converſation be as it becometh the goſpel of Chriſt.

THE word "converſation," here, as well as in other parts of the Bible, does not ſignify our talk or diſcourſe; but takes in the *whole* of our conduct and behaviour in life: ſo that we are to underſtand the precept in the text as a general injunction to live as becomes Chriſtians; to conform ourſelves in all things to the excellent rules and directions laid down in the goſpel of Chriſt; to be "holy, (as St. Peter expreſſes it) "in all manner of converſation."

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The neceſſity of this, in order to our ſalvation, is ſo very plain and evident, both from reaſon and ſcripture, and has been ſo fully ſhewn to you in a former diſcourſe, that I ſhall not repeat what I ſaid upon that ſubject: but ſhall rather point out to you ſome particulars, in which we ſhould be more that ordinarily careful to follow the direction in the text; and ſo approve ourſelves *real* Chriſtians, and ſincere diſciples of him whoſe name we bear, and by whom we hope to be ſaved.

Now "the wiſdom that is from above," or the religion which Chriſt came down from heaven to teach us, "is firſt pure:" that is, it requires great purity of heart as well as of manners—what the Pſalmiſt calls "a clean heart," and "clean hands"—ſtrict chaſtity in all our thoughts, words, and actions. "For this ye know," ſays the apoſtle (and I earneſtly beſeech you always to bear it in remembrance), "that no unclean perſon hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Chriſt and of God."

Again: it is "peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be intreated." The goſpel, like its divine author, breathes the ſpirit of love, peace, and benevolence, in every part of it. "By this," ſays our Saviour, "ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one to another." You ſee, he makes it the diſtinguiſhing mark, or badge, of our profeſſion. And, as a peaceable diſpoſition and behaviour is the natural fruit of love, ſo we are commanded to "have peace one with another;—to "live in peace," or "peaceably with all men;"—to "ſeek peace,

and enſue it;"—with many more exhortations to the ſame purpoſe.——Gentleneſs is another Chriſtian grace, or virtue, ſpringing from love. It ſignifies a meek and quiet ſpirit, a mild temper of mind, that ſhews itſelf in a ſuitable behaviour; kind, affable, and courteous. "I beſeech you," ſays St. Paul, "by the meekneſs and gentleneſs of Chriſt:" which qualities he particularly recommends, in another place, to the imitation of his diſciples; where he ſays, "Put them in mind to be gentle, ſhewing all meekneſs unto all men."—Another mark of a true Chriſtian temper is, that it is "eaſy to be intreated;"—obliging, complying, and ready to forgive injuries and offences. The great duty of forgiveneſs our Lord lays a very particular ſtreſs upon, as abſolutely and indiſpenſably neceſſary to our being forgiven by God. What words can be plainer, or ſtronger, to this effect, than what he uſes immediately after the prayer he teaches his diſciples; "If ye forgive men *their* treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive *you*. But if ye forgive not men *their* treſpaſſes, neither will your father forgive *your* treſpaſſes." And in his parable of the mercileſs ſervant (Matt. xviii.) he enforces the ſame doctrine in terms no leſs clear and powerful. The goſpel wiſdom of the Chriſtian ſpirit is alſo "full of mercy and good fruits;" prompting us to every act of humanity and compaſſion, to ſhew our love in actual ſervices to all within our reach; following the example of our bleſſed Maſter, who "went about doing good." —Laſtly; it is "without partiality, and without

hypocriſy." The true Chriſtian is open, ſincere, honeſt; free from every narrow ſelfiſh view, from all undue prejudice and partiality. His love is "without diſſimulation." His words flow from his heart; and his actions correſpond with his words.

I have here given you a ſhort ſketch of Chriſtian virtue, or of ſuch a converſation as "becomes the goſpel of Chriſt." A more particular account of its relative, or ſocial, duties, you will find admirably drawn up in your Catechiſm, in that article which deſcribes your duty towards your neighbour. Let me beg of you often to look at it, and to conſider it with attention: a better leſſon you cannot have, nor can you follow a better guide. Think of it every day of your lives; and practiſe it conſcientiouſly. Indeed the *whole* Catechiſm is ſo excellent, that I would wiſh you to make it your conſtant companion through life. Do not forget or deſpiſe it, as if it were fit only for the uſe of *children:* it is fit for *every* age; as it contains the ſum and ſubſtance of the Chriſtian religion.

There is one quality, or diſpoſition, which both our Saviour and his apoſtles, in a very particular manner, recommend, and require as abſolutely neceſſary to a diſciple of Chriſt; which is, heavenly mindedneſs:—to "ſet our affections on things above;" to make heaven the principal end of our thoughts and purſuits. For, as St. Paul expreſſes it, "our converſation is in heaven"—*there* lies our true intereſt—*that* is the country to which we belong—*there* is our treaſure—

treaſure—*there*, then, ſhould our "hearts be alſo." If they are ſo, if we are ſincere and in earneſt in our religion, we ſhall not fail to fulfil the precept in the text; we ſhall conſider ourſelves as ſtrangers, or travellers, upon earth; and our "converſation" *here* will be "ſuch as becometh the goſpel of Chriſt."

ADMONITION XIV.

ROMANS xii. 11—former part.

Not ſlothful in Buſineſs.

NEVER BE IDLE—ſloth, or idleneſs, is the ruin and deſtruction both of body and ſoul. It is not only a great evil in itſelf, but it is productive alſo of many other evils. It leads to ſickneſs, poverty, ſenſuality, diſhoneſty, and loſs of character. It is unnatural: for we are by nature formed for action, and fond of it. It is contrary to our duty and obligation as men, or ſocial creatures; who were made to help, and do good to, one another. It is contrary to the expreſs will and command of God; who has taught and directed us, in his holy word, to be diligent and induſtrious, active and laborious, in our ſeveral callings; and to be continually employed in ſerving and aſſiſting our brethren. The miſery and ſinfulneſs of a ſlothful and idle life, and the bleſſings of an induſtrious one, are ſet before us in very ſtrong terms, in many paſſages of holy ſcripture. "Slothfulneſs," ſays the wiſe man, "caſteth into a deep ſleep, and an idle ſoul ſhall ſuffer hunger." "The ſoul

of the ſluggard deſireth, and hath nothing: but the ſoul of the diligent ſhall be made fat." "The hand of the diligent maketh rich," but "the deſire of the ſlothful killeth him." "In all labour there is profit," not only in this life, but our "works," we are aſſured, will "follow" us into that which is to come; there to meet with their full reward: where, on the other hand, "the unprofitable ſervant;" he who has waſted his time here in idleneſs, and made no uſe or improvement of the talents committed to his truſt; ſhall be "caſt into outer darkneſs," and puniſhed with eternal miſery.—In the text, as well as in many other parts of his Epiſtles, St. Paul warns us againſt the ſin of idleneſs, and exhorts us to the oppoſite virtue of induſtry. For when he forbids us to be ſlothful, he plainly bids us be diligent; as he commands his diſciples, in another place, to "work with their own hands," and to "labour, working the thing which is good:" and again, "if any will not work," ſays he, "neither ſhould he eat." The words, "Not ſlothful in buſineſs," imply theſe two things: firſt, that we have all ſome buſineſs to do; ſome work, ſome calling, that we ought to be employed in; and, ſecondly, that we ſhould be active and induſtrious in following it.—Our all-wiſe and good Creator has deſigned and fitted us for action and labour, both of body and mind. He has made it neceſſary to our own well-being, as individuals; and likewiſe to the good of ſociety, as we are ſocial creatures, or "members one of another." Various and different are the taſks allotted us; as are the abi-

ſities and opportunities we are furniſhed with of performing them. High and low, rich and poor, old and young, learned and unlearned, we have all ſome work aſſigned us, which it is our duty to do, both for ourſelves, and for one another. Some are to work with their hands, ſome with their head, and ſome with both. Our ſeveral ſituations in life plainly point out to us, what it is our duty to be employed in. Our principal concern is, to be diligent in that employment. "Whatſoever thy hand," or thy head, "findeth to do, do it with thy might." Exert all your ſtrength, uſe all your diligence, in the execution of it. Loſe no time, ſpare no pains, in learning, and in doing, your duty.—You, my good children, are more particularly obliged to be induſtrious in your ſeveral occupations—you have had great advantages in being taught your duty; you are therefore doubly bound to practiſe it. While *we* are working with our *heads* for *your* good, *you* are without excuſe if you do not work diligently with your *hands* for *your own*—while *our* time is employed in inſtructing you, it is *your* buſineſs and duty to profit by our inſtructions. You are young, and healthy, and able to work: and your ſtation in life is ſuch as requires you ſo to do for your bread and ſupport. It is your duty alſo to work for your parents, and occaſionally for your other friends and benefactors. And believe me, it is as much your intereſt and your happineſs, as it is your duty, to be always well employed. It will give you health of body, and peace of mind. It will make your days cheerful and comfortable, and

your ſleep of nights ſweet and refreſhing. It will make you beloved and eſteemed by all that know you. It will enable you to provide, not only for yourſelves, but for your families likewiſe, when you have any. It will make you uſeful members of ſociety; good neighbours, and valuable friends.—By your *example*, at leaſt, you may all do good; and in ſome ſort fulfil the precept of our bleſſed Saviour, to "let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

And here let me give you one caution: that while you are diſcharging your duty towards *men*, you do not forget your duty towards God. Indeed by doing the one, you are in a great meaſure diſcharging the other. But what I mean is, that you never let the duties of your ſeveral ſtations or employments in life, ſo far take up your time and thoughts, as to hinder you from praying to God, and paying him the worſhip that is due to him, both in private and public. For remember, that no labour or buſineſs can proſper without *his* bleſſing attending it; and that the ſame commandment which permits, and enjoins, our working for *ſix* days, requires us to "keep holy" the ſeventh; that, as we ſhould be employed chiefly on the other days in providing for our *bodily* and *temporal* wants, ſo on the ſabbath, or Lord's day, we ſhould labour for our *ſpiritual* ſuſtenance; for that "meat which endureth unto everlaſting life."

ADMONI-

ADMONITION XV.

Ephesians vi. 7 and 8.

With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

We are here, as well as in other parts of the epistles, instructed in the duty of servants to their masters and mistresses. For the scripture, being a rule of life and manners, as well as of faith, gives us directions, not only for our duty in general, but also for the discharge of every branch of it in particular; according to our different callings and situations. Now, as many of you may probably go to service in some part of your life, some rules for your good behaviour therein may be of use and benefit to you; and such I mean at present to lay before you.

In the text you may observe, first, a general direction given you, *how* to do your duty as servants properly and conscientiously: and secondly, a *reward* held forth to you as an encouragement for so doing—Let us consider each distinctly—The rule is this—"With good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men." "With good-will," signifies, with a willing and ready mind; with an affectionate and obliging disposition; with a desire to please "not by constraint, but willingly," and cheerfully.—And it is to be done, "as to the Lord, and not to men,"—that is, from a *religious* prin-

ciple, or a ſenſe of duty towards God. As the apoſtle elſewhere expreſſes it; "not with eye-ſervice, as men-pleaſers, but in ſingleneſs of heart, fearing God"—" and whatſoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." —The meaning is, not that we are to *overlook* our duty and obligations to men; but that we are to *look farther*, to the fountain and origin of all duty, which is the will and command of God: and that, while we ſerve our maſters *on earth*, we ſhould conſider ourſelves as doing ſervice to CHRIST, who is our maſter *in heaven*. —" Not with eye-ſervice, as men-pleaſers,"— that is, not barely endeavouring to pleaſe, and gain the good-will of, our maſters, by doing what we think they will like, when their eyes are *upon* us: but ſerving them truly and faithfully at *all* times, when they are *abſent*, as well as *preſent*—" as the ſervants of Chriſt," who always ſees what we are doing—" in ſingleneſs of heart" —that is ſincerely and conſcientiouſly—" fearing God," and " doing his will from the heart;" —always remembering, that he ſearcheth our hearts, and knoweth our inward thoughts, and moſt ſecret deſigns, as well as our outward actions; and that he will reward, or puniſh, us, according as they are good, or bad, in his ſight. Whatſoever therefore we do, in the ſervice of our maſters and miſtreſſes, we are to do it " heartily," and " with a good-will," as unto God, and unto Chriſt—to whom we are accountable for our behaviour, in this, as well as in every other part of our duty towards man. The ſame direction that David gave his ſon Solomon

lomon for the ſervice of God, will hold good for the ſervice of our earthly maſters—"Serve him," ſays he, "with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind."—The truth is, that without a willing diſpoſition, and a ſincere deſire of doing our duty, nothing can be done as it ought. A good-will is the great ſpring of action. A ready and cheerful mind is the great ſupport of it. It gives vigour to our faculties, quickens our diligence, and enables us to overcome many difficulties. It makes the diſcharge of our duty both eaſy and pleaſant to us. In ſervice, as well as in every other ſituation of life, the beſt rule we can go by is what St. Paul lays down for the giving of alms; to act "not grudgingly, or of neceſſity"—and for the ſame reaſon he mentions—"for God," ſays he, "loveth a cheerful giver."—So we may ſay no leſs truly; God loveth a ſervant, who does his duty cheerfully, and willingly.—And we may add, he will reward him accordingly. For ſo the apoſtle goes on in the text; "knowing," ſays he, "that whatſoever good thing any man doth, the ſame ſhall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." God, who is "no reſpecter of perſons," will moſt aſſuredly reward every man, without diſtinction, according to his deeds.—Our ſtations and allotments in *this* life are indeed very different, and the good things of it (as they are called) are unequally diſtributed. But the treaſures of the *next*, the riches and bleſſings of heaven, are open to all alike:—with regard to them, it matters not what our condition is here in this world;—if we do but our duty in that

ſtate of life to which God has called us, we are ſure of being happy hereafter, beyond all we can hope or conceive, to all eternity. Whether high or low, rich or poor, "bond or free," it makes no difference. We are all alike under God's notice; all equally accountable to him for our actions and behaviour; and all equally ſure of being rewarded by him for our good conduct, or puniſhed for our bad. The good and faithful ſervant, who acts from a religious principle, and with a willing mind; who ſerves his maſter honeſtly, and diligently; doing his duty to the beſt of his knowledge and ability; will generally find his account, and be rewarded, *in this* world. But be that as it may, he is certain that his ſervices will not be forgotten or unrewarded in the *next:* where he will "enter into the joy of his Lord," and partake of it for ever and ever.

ADMONITION XVI.

TITUS ii. 9 and 10.

Exhort ſervants to be obedient unto their own maſters, and to pleaſe them well in all things: not anſwering again; not purloining; but ſhewing all good fidelity: that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

HAVING conſidered the duty of ſervants in general, we will now take a view of the ſeveral branches of it in particular. And for this purpoſe we cannot have a better guide than the exhortation of the Apoſtle in the text; which

which ſhews us both what is to be done, and what is to be avoided. In the firſt place, ſervants are "to be obedient unto their own maſters,"—and of courſe to their miſtreſſes; the ſame obligation binding them to one, as to the other: ſo that when one only is named, we are to underſtand, and apply the direction to, both. Now the very notion of ſervitude implies obedience. It is the maſter's part, to command; the ſervant's, to obey. You muſt always do what your maſter or miſtreſs bids you. You muſt not diſpute their orders, becauſe you fancy them unreaſonable, or hard to comply with; but you muſt endeavour to execute them in the beſt manner you can. When they tell you to do a thing *one* way, you muſt not attempt to do it *another*; becauſe perhaps you think it eaſier or quicker.—No, they are much better judges than you, and they are the only proper judges how to have their own buſineſs done. It is your duty to do it as they direct; without murmuring, or diſputing. You ſhould obey them willingly, readily, and cheerfully; uſing your beſt endeavours (as the text directs) "to pleaſe them well in all things." You ſhould not be content with barely following orders; with doing juſt what is required of you, and no more. You ſhould be careful to do every thing in the beſt manner, and with the greateſt diſpatch, in your power; to ſhew that you take a pleaſure in obliging thoſe, whom you are bound to ſerve. For this end you ſhould not always wait for *receiving* their orders; but endeavour to be *beforehand* with them, in doing what you think will

pleaſe them. A free and voluntary ſervice is doubly pleaſing and acceptable. To do what we are commanded, is an act of ſtrict duty, as paying a debt is of ſtrict juſtice. But to do a piece of ſervice of our own accord, without being bid, is like a free gift, and will be valued accordingly. But don't miſtake me. Though I compare it to a free gift, it is ſtill our duty to *pleaſe*, as well as to *obey:* as it is, in like manner, our duty to be *generous*, as well as *juſt*. And if you have but a deſire and inclination, you will never want opportunities of pleaſing thoſe you ſerve. Let it be your conſtant ſtudy and delight ſo to do.——The text now informs us, what we are *not* to do—" not anſwering again—not purloining." To anſwer again, ſignifies, to contradict, to argue, or diſpute, a point with a maſter or miſtreſs—or to give them pert and ſaucy anſwers. Theſe are great faults, contrary to all the rules of good manners, contrary to the duty of ſervants; which I charge you to avoid. When you are ſpoken to, the leſs you ſay, the better. Receive your orders ſilently and ſubmiſſively. When you are told of your faults, make no reply, except to ſay, you are ſorry for having offended, and that you will do ſo no more.—And be ſure to *do* as you *promiſe*. It is by actions, not by words, that you muſt ſhew your ſorrow, and your amendment. After, " not anſwering again," follows, " not purloining." By " purloining," is meant every ſort of theft, or diſhoneſty; which is not only a breach of duty, but a moſt abominable ſin; every kind and degree of which you muſt keep

clear

clear of, as you value your character, your life, or your ſalvation. In this, as in other ſins, *little* offences lead to *great* ones; and he that begins with cheating and pilfering, will in time proceed to the higher crimes of theft and robbery, and moſt likely end his life at the gallows. Beware, therefore, I intreat you, of the firſt beginnings of this ſin. Never take what belongs to another, be the thing ever ſo ſmall or trifling. And particularly, never meddle with what belongs to your maſter or miſtreſs; for this is a double crime; a breach of truſt, as well as diſhoneſty. For you are required not only to ſerve and obey them, but (as the text goes on to inſtruct us) to ſhew them "all good fidelity"—that is, to be ſtrictly faithful to them in the management of all their concerns—to make *their* intereſt your *own* – in ſhort, to do by *them*, as you would they ſhould do unto *you*, were you in their place, and they in your's.—This takes in a large compaſs of duty, and compleats the character of a good ſervant. Be faithful to them, therefore, in *every* thing—to their property, by making no waſte, and improving every thing to the utmoſt of your power—and to their good name and reputation, by always ſpeaking handſomely of them, and taking their part, if at any time you hear them ſlandered or abuſed. And as you are to ſerve them faithfully and obediently yourſelves, ſo you are to uſe your beſt perſuaſions, and endeavours, to make your fellow-ſervants do the ſame.

The text concludes with a motive, or encouragement, to ſervants, for their general good behaviour:

behaviour: "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"—that is, that by doing their duty in that ſtate of life to which they are called, they may be an ornament to their profeſſion, and do credit to the religion which teaches it.—But of this more in my next.

ADMONITION XVII.

TITUS ii. 10.—latter part.

———*That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*

THE Apoſtle having laid down ſeveral excellent rules and directions to ſervants for the due diſcharge of their duty, enforces the obſervance of them from this powerful conſideration; "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." By "the doctrine of God our Saviour," we are to underſtand the religion of Chriſt: and whoever lives ſuitably to that religion, and regulates his life and behaviour by its holy laws and precepts, is ſaid to "adorn" it; that is, to bring credit to it, or to be an ornament to his profeſſion—a ſhining light, whereby others may be directed and led to follow his good example. And this is in the power of every Chriſtian, without exception. Let his ſtation in life be what it will, if he lives agreeably to it, and conſcientiouſly performs the duties it requires, he may be ſaid to *adorn* the doctrine or religion he profeſſes: as, on the other hand, whoever lives unſuitably to his profeſſion, whatever outward ornaments he may be

diſtinguiſhed

diſtinguiſhed by, is a ſhame and diſgrace to it; bringing a reproach, and ſcandal, on that holy name by which he is called. By "breaking the law," he is ſaid to "diſhonour God." So that it is not our rank or ſituation in life, but our good or bad behaviour in that ſituation, which is properly an ornament or diſgrace to us. By doing our duty, we may adorn the *loweſt*; by tranſgreſſing it, we may diſgrace the *higheſt*. And this ſurely ſhould be a great encouragement to ſervants to be active, and diligent, and faithful, in the diſcharge of their duty; as well as a great comfort to them, when they conſider that they are thereby adorning the religion in which that duty is taught; that they bring credit, not to themſelves only, but to their holy profeſſion likewiſe; that by ſerving their earthly maſters faithfully, they are doing an acceptable ſervice to their maſter in heaven: that by promoting the intereſt of one, they are ſerving the cauſe of the other. Think, therefore, my good children, how much depends on your behaviour, and what you have to anſwer for, when you go into ſervice: not only your own credit and reputation, but alſo that of the religion you have been brought up, and ſo carefully inſtructed, in, —which you will either recommend and promote by your good example, or diſgrace and diſparage by your bad one. And be not aſhamed of your condition, as if it were mean and diſgraceful. There is nothing mean but vice and ſin; nothing ſhameful but wickedneſs and diſobedience. A bad ſervant is indeed a ſcandal to his profeſſion, and a peſt of ſociety: a good

one

one is an ornament of the one, and a valuable member of the other. Look into your bible, and there you will ſee what is the true ornament of a Chriſtian:—not *outward* ſhow and finery, but that of "a meek and quiet ſpirit;" which, we are told, "is in the ſight of God of great price;" and which is, in a peculiar manner, the diſtinguiſhing mark and character of a good ſervant. Our bleſſed Maſter, who, though he was Lord of all, "took upon him the form of a ſervant," that we might follow the example of his great humility, left this admirable leſſon to all his diſciples: "Learn of me," ſaye he; "for I am meek and lowly in heart." And if HE, though he was the Son of God "learned," and practiſed, "obedience" to man; ſurely *we* are doubly bound to obey thoſe who are ſet over us, and to ſerve them truly and faithfully, as we are the ſervants of Chriſt.

Before I have done, I muſt deſire your particular attention to the laſt words of the text—"*in all things*;" which imply, that our obedience to the commands of God, in whatever ſtation we are, muſt be *general*, and *univerſal*. If we would adorn our profeſſion, we muſt conform ourſelves to it *in all things*: our *whole* life and converſation muſt be "ſuch as becometh the goſpel of Chriſt." We muſt uſe our beſt endeavours to improve, and excel, in *every* part of our duty; that, as St. James expreſſes it, we "may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing." For if we neglect any duty, or indulge ourſelves in the practice of any vice or ſin, we are a diſgrace to our holy religion, and deſerve not the name of

Chriſtians.

Chriſtians. God, of his infinite mercy and goodneſs, has indeed offered "ſalvation unto all men" through Chriſt Jeſus; but it is upon this expreſs condition, that "denying," or renouncing, all "ungodlineſs and wordly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent world;" or, in the words of the text, that we ſhould "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things;"—always remembering, that the ſame divine Perſon who once came from heaven to *ſave* the world, will hereafter come to *judge* it; to call every one of us to account for our behaviour, and to reward or puniſh us according to our deeds. And God grant that this conſideration may have its due weight and influence on us all! that in whatever ſtation of life his providence ſhall place us, we may do the duties of that ſtation faithfully and conſcientiouſly;—not murmuring or repining, but content and thankful to the Giver of all goodneſs;—keeping conſtantly in view "the end of our faith," and obedience; "even the SALVATION OF OUR SOULS."

ADMONITION XVIII.

1 TIMOTHY vi. 6.

Godlineſs with contentment is great gain.

THE deſire of gain is common to moſt people; and if properly directed, and kept within due bounds, it ſerves as a ſpur to induſtry, and ought not to be diſcouraged. But let me aſk, *What is gain?* and how is it to be acquired?

acquired? Does it conſiſt merely in wealth, and what are called the good things of *this* life? No; theſe are but a ſmall portion of it; of inferior value, and of very uncertain tenure; and ſhould therefore be but the *ſecondary* objects of our purſuit. In order to judge rightly, and act properly, in this buſineſs, let us conſult the word of God. "WISDOM," ſays Solomon (by which he always means religion, or godlineſs) "is the principal thing, therefore GET WISDOM; and with all thy getting GET UNDERSTANDING." And the apoſtle, in the text, tells us, that "godlineſs with contentment is great gain." *Without* it, all the riches in the world could give us no real comfort or happineſs; and *with* it, we cannot fail to be happy even in the loweſt and pooreſt condition. "The merchandiſe of it is better than the merchandiſe of ſilver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." It is a "pearl of great price;" a treaſure of inеſtimable value; which we may all obtain if we pleaſe. We cannot all be rich, or great: but we may all be godly: we may all be contented.——Let us conſider the text a little more particularly: it will afford us much matter of uſeful inſtruction.

The word "godlineſs," ſignifies properly the ſame as piety, or a right diſpoſition of the heart towards God. But we may look upon it here as including the *whole* of our duty, which indeed naturally flows from a truly pious heart. For whoever ſincerely loves God, will love his brother alſo; and will endeavour to ſerve and pleaſe God by a general obedience to all his commandments.

commandments. Now one great part of our duty, is contentment; ſo that there can be no true godlineſs without it. The apoſtle therefore joins them together, and recommends them under the notion of "great gain" or profit: as he ſays in another part of the ſame epiſtle, that "godlineſs is *profitable* unto *all* things"—it is the greateſt gain we can be poſſeſſed of—"having" (as he goes on to inform us) "promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." The advantages attending it in this life are many and great. Generally, health of body; and always, peace of mind. A good name, which, Solomon ſays, "is rather to be choſen than great riches;" and oftentimes a good ſhare of wealth beſides. And in the next life the gain is certain, and unſpeakably great. "To him that ſoweth righteouſneſs ſhall be a SURE REWARD."

Again: as godlineſs, in general, is repreſented by the apoſtle as ſo gainful and beneficial to us; ſo that particular part of it, "contentment," as he plainly intimates, contributes not a little to the profits attending it. "A good man" (who muſt be a contented man) "is ſatisfied from himſelf." He has a ſource of comfort within him, independent of fortune, and of all outward accidents or circumſtances, that never fails him. His wants are few, and they are eaſily ſupplied. His deſires are moderate, and they are ſoon ſatisfied. He wiſely conſiders that as he "brought nothing into this world, it is certain he can carry nothing out." "Having food and raiment, he is therewith content;"

thankful,

thankful, and happy. A ſtranger to the cares of covetouſneſs, the pangs of ambition, and the tortures of envy; he enjoys what he has, nor is eagerly ſolicitous for more. Ever truſting in the gracious providence and love of Him, who has promiſed that he will never leave, or forſake, his faithful ſervants.

You ſee, then, what is the *true* intereſt of man; the "GREAT GAIN," which he ought always to have in view, and to purſue with his utmoſt care and diligence. You may obſerve, too, how St. Paul, in imitation of his bleſſed Maſter, takes every opportunity of pointing it out to us, and of exhorting us to "follow after godlineſs;" and, after his own example, "in whatſoever ſtate we are, therewith to be content." But you are not to ſuppoſe that either our Saviour, or his apoſtle, forbids a *moderate* attention to what we call our *worldly* intereſt, or a well-regulated purſuit of *worldly gain*. "Seek ye *firſt* the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs," plainly directs us to make religion, and the bleſſings of heaven, our *principal* care and concern; but as plainly allows us, in a ſecond and ſubordinate view, to attend to the good things of *this* life. Labour and induſtry in our worldly callings are not only permitted, but enjoined, us. He that neglects to "provide for his own houſhold," or family, is, in St. Paul's judgment, "worſe than an infidel." We are directed to be "*content* with food and raiment;" that is, with the bare neceſſaries of life; but we are not forbid to uſe our honeſt endeavours to obtain the comforts and conveniences of it. In a word, we are allowed

lowed to *uſe* this world, and the good things of it, ſo as we do not *abuſe* them: remembering always, that our true and laſting treaſure is in heaven. And where our treaſure is, there may our hearts be alſo.

ADMONITION XIX.

REVELATION xxi. 8—latter part.

ALL LIARS *ſhall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone: which is the ſecond death.*

EVERY ſin is an offence againſt God, and expoſes the ſinner to his anger and puniſhment. But there are ſome ſins particularly hateful to him, and which will be puniſhed by him with more than ordinary ſeverity. Of this ſort is lying. It is a ſin above all others vile and abominable, as it proceeds from a moſt wicked and corrupt heart, and is in a particular manner the work of the Devil, who is called "a liar, and the father of lies." And accordingly we find it in ſcripture ſpoken of in the ſtrongeſt terms of deteſtation; and all liars ranked with the very worſt ſort of ſinners, and ſubjected to the ſevereſt wrath and vengeance of God.—"Lying lips," ſays Solomon, "are abomination to the Lord." And in the text you may obſerve, liars are joined with "murderers, and whoremongers, and ſorcerers, and idolaters;" and are doomed to partake of their puniſhment in the world to come. And again, in the ſame chapter ver. 27, it is written; "There ſhall

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in no wiſe enter into it" (that is, into heaven) "any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or MAKETH A LIE." And again, Ch. xxii. 15, "Without," (that is, in hell) "are dogs, and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and *whoſoever loveth and maketh a lie.*" It is obſervable that liars and murderers are here put together, foraſmuch as lying and murder are two of the moſt heinous ſins, and as they both proceed from the devil, and make men reſemble him, more perhaps than any other ſins whatever. For the devil (as our Saviour tells us) "was a murderer from the beginning," as well as "a liar;" as he by his lies cauſed our firſt parents to commit that ſin, which brought death upon them and their poſterity. So that as he was the father of lies, he was, properly ſpeaking, the author of death, or the murderer of mankind. And whoever follows him in his wicked practices, and particularly in this worſt of wickedneſs, lying; will moſt aſſuredly ſhare with him in his puniſhment, and will have that dreadful ſentence pronounced on him at the day of judgment; "Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"—which is what is called in the text "the *ſecond death*"—and is always ſpoken of in ſcripture as a ſtate of continual torment, and of extreme and endleſs miſery. But it is not in the *next* world only that liars are puniſhed. They commonly, if not always, ſuffer ſeverely in *this*. Lying is above all other ſins hateful to man, as well as to God. Other offenders often meet with pity,

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and ſometimes with favour more than they deſerve; but liars are hated by every body without diſtinction, and ſhunned as the vileſt of wretches, and the peſts of ſociety. Hear what the Pſalmiſt ſays of them. "I hate and abhor lying. He that worketh deceit, ſhall not dwell within my houſe: he that telleth lies, ſhall not tarry in my ſight." And the reaſon of it is plain. For lying ſhews a moſt wicked and depraved heart, a mean and baſe ſpirit, a diſpoſition to all manner of fraud and iniquity.—Other ſinners may have ſome good qualities to recommend them: a liar has none. Againſt other bad perſons we may be upon our guard: but one is never ſafe with a liar. His "throat is an open ſepulchre: the poiſon of aſps is under his lips." And he ſpreads his poiſon far and wide, wherever he goes. His delight is to do miſchief, to deſtroy characters, and to breed quarrels and diſſenſions. No wonder then that ſo baſe and wicked a creature ſhould be deſpiſed and abhorred by every body; and that the name of liar ſhould be reckoned the greateſt mark of infamy and reproach that any perſon can bear.

And now, my good children, *think* only (God forbid you ſhould ever *know*) what a life a liar muſt lead, and what he muſt feel—miſtruſted; never believed, not even if he ſpeaks truth; deſpiſed, ſcorned, hated, by all mankind. Always in danger, always in fear, of being found out, and meeting with the due reward of his wickedneſs. No friend to help or comfort him in his diſtreſs; and the pangs of a guilty conſcience continually tormenting him—till at laſt death

death delivers him over to the heavieſt and ſevereſt puniſhments of the world to come.

"Wherefore," to uſe the words of the Apoſtle, "putting away lying, ſpeak every man truth with his neighbour"—that is, with *every* body—for we are *all* neighbours, in the ſcripture language, and *all* of us "members one of another." Speak the truth at all times, without any mixture of deceit or reſerve. If you have committed a fault at any time, don't conceal or deny it; becauſe that is committing a ſtill greater, and adding ſin to ſin. But own it; acknowledge it; aſk pardon for it; and reſolve never to do ſo again. This is the ſure way, and the only way, to be forgiven, both by God and man. And I charge you, above all things, never to lay your own fault upon another, who is innocent; for that is a double lie, and a great injury, added to lying. But then take notice, on the other hand, that you muſt not tell a lie to ſcreen any body that is in fault, or to ſave him from puniſhment—for this is a falſe good-nature; and lying is always a fault, and a ſin, whatever may be the end propoſed by it. In this, as in every other caſe, there is one ſure rule to go by; we muſt not "do evil that good may come." We muſt not endeavour to ſcreen, or ſerve any body at the expence of truth.

Laſtly; every kind of deceit whatſoever, whether by word or action, partakes of the nature and guilt of lying, and will be puniſhed accordingly. As murderers and liars are joined together in ſcripture, ſo are bloody and deceitful men. "Thou ſhalt deſtroy them that ſpeak leaſing" (that is, liars) "the Lord will abhor the

the bloody and deceitful man," Pſalm v. 6—and again, lv. 23.—But while theſe, and all other wicked perſons, "ſhall be turned into hell;" let us remember for our comfort that whoſoever "walketh uprightly," or lives a good and honeſt life, and ſpeaketh the truth from his heart; that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour;" he "ſhall abide in the tabernacle of the Lord, and dwell in his holy hill," that is, in heaven, for ever and ever.

ADMONITION XX.

EXODUS xxiii. 2—former part.

Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil.

BEWARE OF BAD EXAMPLES.—You are now young; and, I truſt, as to any great offences, innocent. But you will ſoon enter into a wicked world, where you will meet with a multitude of evil-doers: who, not content with being wicked themſelves, will endeavour to draw in others, to be their companions in ſin. They will take advantage of your ignorance and inexperience; will laugh at you, perhaps, for being good and virtuous; and uſe all their arts and perſuaſions to make you as bad as themſelves. Therefore, I ſay unto you again, BEWARE. In your bible you will find many earneſt and powerful warnings to this purpoſe. Let me beg of you to give them the attention they deſerve, and to treaſure them up in your minds—"My ſon," ſays Solomon, "if ſin-

ners entice thee, conſent thou not. Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, paſs not by it; turn from it, and paſs away." For "the words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood;" and their "counſels are deceit." So again, in the New Teſtament—"Be not deceived," ſays St. Paul: "evil communications corrupt good manners." And St. Peter: "Beware leſt ye alſo, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own ſtedfaſtneſs."

To anſwer the gracious end and deſign of God in theſe cautions and admonitions, was our firſt view and purpoſe in ſetting up theſe Sunday-ſchools. It was to keep you out of bad ways, and from following bad examples; as our next was, to train you up in the right way, in the paths of religion and virtue. And as there is no day when more bad examples are to be found, and more evil going forward than on Sunday; perhaps none, that is ſpent ſo idly and ſhamefully by the wicked; we thought it the firſt ſtep to be taken, to bring you, on that ſacred day, into this place of inſtruction, and to ſee you go regularly to church—to ſee you "go with the multitude," not of evil-doers, but of ſuch as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of, who go "to the houſe of God, with the voice of joy and praiſe," to keep his day holy. So far we have the pleaſure to think we have done our duty, and you your's. But it will ſignify little, that you ſpend *Sunday* well, unleſs you ſpend the whole week well likewiſe. The good inſtructions you receive

ceive on *this* day are deſigned to regulate your conduct *every* day: for every day in the week has its proper buſineſs and employment belonging to it, as well as Sunday. "Six days ſhalt thou labour and do all thy work"—which it is as much your duty to do, faithfully and diligently, as it is to keep holy the ſeventh. And as you are commanded on all days alike, to do what is right and good, ſo are you forbid to do what is wrong and evil. The warning, or prohibition, in the text belongs to *every* day; to every hour and minute of the day. It ſhould never be out of our thoughts. For there is always, and ever will be, a multitude of evil-doers; and we are always in danger of being led away by them. You muſt therefore be always upon your guard. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." When you ſay the Lord's prayer, in particular (which I hope you do, ſeriouſly and devoutly, every day of your lives) you ſhould earneſtly beſeech God to "deliver you from evil;"—that is, not only from the devil, who is called the *evil one*, as he is the author and promoter of all wickedneſs; but alſo from evil men, who are his children and inſtruments; that you may not follow, or be led aſtray by, them. And to your prayers you muſt in this, as in every other caſe, join your own hearty endeavours, and uſe all your care and watchfulneſs, for the ſame purpoſe. Avoid all bad people as much as you can. If they follow you, turn away: ſhun them as you would a plague or peſtilence. "Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of dark-

neſs;" that is, with the workers of wickedneſs. Have no familiarity, no intimacy, with them. If you have, depend on it you will catch their wicked ways, and be ruined. It was a wiſe and noble reſolution of David, that he "would not *know* a wicked perſon." The meaning is, that he would ſhew them no countenance or favour; would not ſuffer ſuch to "dwell within his houſe," or even to "tarry in his ſight."—My good children, as you advance in life, you muſt expect to meet with many wicked perſons: but when you know them to be ſo, have nothing to ſay, or to do with them; leſt you add to the multitude of evil doers. You are warned of your danger betimes. Thank God that you are ſo, and make a right uſe of the warning. Believe me, it will be no excuſe for you in the day of judgment, to ſay that the number of ſinners was great, and that you did only as others did. Remember, the text is plain and poſitive;—no words can be plainer—"Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil." The *number* of ſinners can never alter the *nature* of ſin, or ſcreen the ſinner from the wrath and puniſhment of God. As, on the contrary, the way of holineſs will no leſs ſurely lead to his favour, and to eternal happineſs, however "few there may be that find it." Be ye therefore followers of them, who through faith, and well-doing, ſhall "inherit the promiſes:" knowing, that whoever you follow in this world, the ſame you muſt follow in the world to come: either the wicked "into everlaſting puniſhment;" or "the righteous into life eternal."

ADMONITION XXI.

Hebrews xiii. 16.

To do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Among the Jews, sacrifices made a great part of their religious worship. God Almighty ordained them for wise and good purposes; partly, as a token of their subjection and obligation to Him, as their supreme Lord and law-giver; but (as it is generally supposed) principally, to lead their thoughts, and direct their faith, towards the great sacrifice, that was one day to be offered for all mankind. Since the offering of this all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ on the cross, others have entirely ceased: except only the figurative sacrifice of an holy and good life, which was always, and ever will be, of high value in the sight of God. Even under the law he declared that "obedience was better than sacrifice;" and that he desired "mercy," and the knowledge of God (that is, the *practical* knowledge of him, or obedience to his will) "more than burnt offerings." Under the Gospel, as I said, that is the only sacrifice required: and it is absolutely and indispensably required; both as an evidence of our gratitude to God, and as the condition of our reaping the benefit of the sacrifice of our blessed Redeemer. "I beseech you therefore, brethren," (says St. Paul) "by the mercies of God, that ye present your

bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice," and in like manner, in the text; "To do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed."

But you will ſay perhaps, How does this precept concern *you?*—how can *you* do good in your *low* ſtation of life? or what have you to ſpare to give to *others*, who have ſo little of *your own*, and are obliged to work for your daily bread?—I hope to ſhew you very plainly, that you have it in your power to do *much* good; and if you have, it certainly is your duty to do it. I hope too to convince you, that you may have opportunities of communicating, or parting with, ſomething to others more needy than yourſelves, and when you have, you certainly ought to lay hold on them.

In the firſt place, I would have you obſerve, that every good perſon, whatever his ſtation may be, is an uſeful member of ſociety, and therefore does good to it. In the body of Chriſtians, as in the natural body, every member, from the higheſt to the loweſt, has his proper office aſſigned him; which if he fills, and diſcharges the duties of it, as he ought, he in ſome ſort contributes to the good of the whole. Beſides, he does good by his example. It is an old and a true remark, that example is more powerful than precept: ſo apt are we to catch the manners of thoſe we keep company with. As a wicked man has more to anſwer for than his own ſins, by the influence of his bad example

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on others: ſo a good one has the pleaſure to reflect, that beſides his own virtues, he has been the happy inſtrument of raiſing, or forwarding, the like good ſeeds among his neighbours. There is a very ſtrong and beautiful expreſſion to this purpoſe in the epiſtle to the Hebrews; where the apoſtle exhorts them to "*provoke* unto love, and to good works"—that is, to ſtir up, to excite, to cauſe a ſort of contention and emulation, one with another, in the diſcharge of kind and good offices.—Thus much in general.

But to be more particular.—You may all of you do good to your parents, and other relations, by working for them, and being of ſervice to them in an hundred different ways, too many to mention in this place. You may, in like manner, do good to your friends and neighbours, in a variety of inſtances. You may attend the ſick; aſſiſt the helpleſs; comfort the afflicted. Children and young people, by their quickneſs and activity, may often be of great uſe in helping thoſe that are older; and when they ſhew a ready diſpoſition to be ſo, their ſervices are doubly acceptable. The affectionate and dutiful attention of a ſon, or daughter, cheers the heart of a parent, and in that reſpect may be ſaid to do him good. Love and kindneſs to a brother, or ſiſter, or neighbour, is always pleaſing, and is often of real benefit. In ſhort, if you are really inclined, and deſirous, to do good, you will never want opportunities of doing it. The whole life of our bleſſed Saviour was ſo employed. We are told, that he "went

about doing good;" and it is our duty, and ſhould be our conſtant endeavour, to follow his example.

The other part of the direction in the text is, "not to forget to communicate,"—that is, to remember to give, or impart, to others, ſomewhat of our own, which they may ſtand in need of. And this you may all do, more or leſs, however ſmall your portion may be of this world's goods: for there are few ſo poor, but others are poorer. Nor will your gift, however ſlender, be without its value or reward. Remember, how highly the widow's two mites were prized by our Lord, as it was "all that ſhe had;" and therefore ſhe was conſidered by him as caſting in more than all the rich, who contributed only a ſmall portion out of their abundance. And remember what he ſays upon another occaſion: "Whoſoever ſhall give to drink unto one of theſe little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a diſciple; verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward."

ADMONITION XXII.

PSALM XXXIX. 1.

I ſaid, I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin not with my tongue.

A TRULY wiſe ſaying, and pious reſolution, which we ought all of us to follow. "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep the door of my lips;" was David's prayer, and ſhould be our's. For as "in many things we offend all;" ſo there is none, perhaps, in which we are ſo liable and apt to offend, as in our ſpeech, or with our tongue. The offences of it are ſo various, and the opportunities of committing them ſo frequent, that it requires all our care and circumſpection to guard againſt them. And happy the man who has ſo far the command of himſelf as to keep clear of them. For "if any man offend not in word." ſays the apoſtle, "the ſame is a perfect man, and able alſo to bridle the whole body." By the maſtery of his tongue, he ſhews that he can ſubdue all his irregular paſſions and appetites; and comes as near as may be to the character of perfection, or to that of a good and compleat Chriſtian.

I ſhall point out to you the ſeveral ſins, or offences of the tongue: and may God give you grace to avoid them!

The firſt, and higheſt, of theſe is curſing and ſwearing; a ſin of the moſt heinous nature, for

which there is not the leaſt ſhadow of excuſe. I really want words to deſcribe the exceſſive wickedneſs of it. It is ſetting the Almighty at defiance; daring his vengeance; and offering him the groſſeſt inſult. It is, beſides, the greateſt breach of charity to our fellow creatures. One would think it the ſin of *devils*, rather than of *men*. The tongue of the ſwearer may be truly ſaid to be "ſet on fire of hell."

Another offence of the mouth againſt God, is the uſing his name careleſsly and inconſiderately in common converſation. This is certainly inconſiſtent with that reſpect, and reverence, which is due to him. Even to ſay, Good God! or Oh Lord! or any ſuch expreſſion, is wrong and diſreſpectful. The ſacred names of God, and of Chriſt, ſhould never be uſed but in prayer, or on ſome very ſolemn occaſion.

The next ſin of the tongue I ſhall mention, is that of ſlandering, or abuſing, our neighbour. And, however common the practice, it is always ſpoken of in ſcripture as a ſin of the deepeſt dye. "Whiſperers, and backbiters;" are placed by St. Paul among the very worſt of ſinners—"haters of God," as well as injurious to men. And in another black catalogue of wicked perſons, he ſays expreſsly, that "revilers" *ſhall not* "inherit the kingdom of God." Slandering, or ſpreading falſe reports of another, is the worſt ſort of that abominable ſin of lying; which having treated of in a diſcourſe by itſelf, I ſhall ſay nothing more of it at preſent: but ſhall rather caution you againſt that kind of evil ſpeaking,

which tho' perhaps it keeps within the bounds of truth, is ſtill hurtful to our neighbour, and therefore condemned in ſcripture, as a breach of our duty to him. Under this head is included all uncharitable and cenſorious diſcourſe—whatever tends to hurt another's reputation, or to give him uneaſineſs. Accordingly, St. Paul charges Titus to admoniſh his diſciples, "to ſpeak evil of no man"—and again: "to be no brawlers"—that is, to uſe no angry, or quarrelſome, language—which is another offence of the tongue; contrary to all the rules of good manners; deſtructive of peace, and good neighbourhood; and directly oppoſite to the ſpirit, and precepts, of our holy religion; which requires us to be "gentle, meek, and courteous." And here let me particularly warn you againſt all rude and diſreſpectful language to your ſuperiors; eſpecially to your parents, and to your maſters and miſtreſſes. They are intitled not barely to civility, but to your dutiful ſubmiſſion, and reſpect. I charge you never to give them a pert or ſaucy anſwer; never to ſhew any reſentment at what they ſay to you, but to receive their orders, and take their reproofs, ſilently and quietly, as becomes good children and ſervants: always remembering, that if you offend againſt your parents, or maſters, *on earth*, you offend at the ſame time againſt your father, and maſter, who is *in heaven*.

Another ſin of the tongue is lewd or indecent diſcourſe; what the apoſtle calls "filthy communication." Let no ſuch ever come out of

your mouth: and if others uſe it, turn away from them; for they are moſt dangerous companions. It is a very great ſin, and of the worſt conſequence; proceeding from a corrupt and wicked heart, and leading to every thing that is ſhameful and abominable: to what "ought not to be named," much leſs practiſed, among Chriſtians.

The laſt offence I ſhall mention is that of vain, idle, or fooliſh talking; which, we are told, is "not convenient," that is, unbecoming, unſuitable to the character of a Chriſtian. It is certainly a leſs fault than the others I have mentioned. But then obſerve, that, as little faults lead to great ones, ſo much fooliſh diſcourſe generally ends in what is wicked and criminal. It is, at beſt, a great waſte of time, and hindrance of buſineſs: according to a vulgar but true ſaying, that great *talkers* are little *doers*. And Solomon tells us, "that in the multitude of words there wanteth not ſin." But what I wiſh you chiefly to attend to, and often ſeriouſly to think of, is that awful declaration of our bleſſed Saviour, with which I ſhall conclude. "I ſay unto you, that every *idle* word that men ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment—For by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified; and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned."

ADMONITION XXIII.

PSALM CXIX. 6.

Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments.

SHAME is the natural conſequence of ſin. So it was with our firſt parents. While they were innocent, we read that they "were not aſhamed;" but no ſooner had they diſobeyed the divine command, than ſhame and confuſion followed. They were "afraid," and hid themſelves. Now ſhame is always accompanied with pain and uneaſineſs. And it is wiſely ſo ordered by our good and gracious Creator, in order to keep us from ſinning: that as we all wiſh to avoid pain, we ſhould avoid ſhame which is the cauſe of it; and refrain from ſin, as it is the cauſe of ſhame. Do you then deſire *not* to be aſhamed? Follow the advice of the holy Pſalmiſt—Do your duty—obey God in all things—and "then," you may ſay in the words of the text, "I ſhall not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments."

My firſt advice to you therefore is "that ye ſin not"—that you do nothing to be aſhamed of: for there is nothing we ought to be aſhamed of but ſin. However, ſince, notwithſtanding all your care and endeavours, you will ſometimes fail in your duty; my next advice is, that whenever

ever you do offend, you take ſhame to yourſelves for ſo doing. For ſhame leads to ſorrow, and ſorrow (if it be ſincere) to amendment. There is a *godly* ſhame, as well as "a godly ſorrow" (as the apoſtle calls it), which "worketh repentance." Be aſhamed therefore of having done wrong; but never be aſhamed of owning it. If you confeſs your faults, with ſhame and concern, and with a firm reſolution of never committing the like again, they will be forgiven you. To be without ſhame, or without feeling, for one's ſins, is a ſure ſign of a moſt depraved and hardened heart. One part of St. Paul's deſcription of the moſt abandoned men is, that they glory "in their ſhame,"—or boaſt of thoſe ſins which they ought to be aſhamed of.

But there is a falſe and bad ſhame, too common among all, and eſpecially among young people, which I muſt caution you againſt, as being deſtructive of all virtue and goodneſs. I mean, a ſhame of doing one's duty. Hear what our Saviour ſays of it: "Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words, of him ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when he ſhall come" to judgment. Think only, what it is, to be aſhamed of Chriſt, and to have Chriſt aſhamed of you. Surely you muſt be ſhocked at the thought of it, and tremble at the conſequence: to hear him ſay, at that awful day, "I know you not—depart from me."—Now to be aſhamed of the "words" of Chriſt, is to be aſhamed of living according to the laws and rules

rules of his goſpel: and this is, in fact, being aſhamed of Chriſt himſelf. It is diſowning him for our Lord and Maſter. For it ſignifies nothing to acknowledge him with our *mouths*, if we deny him by our *actions*. "If a man love me," ſays he, "he will keep my words:" which no one can do, who is aſhamed of them. This falſe ſhame is like that falſe fear, which is condemned and forbidden in ſcripture, as inconſiſtent with a religious and good life. "The fear of man," ſays Solomon, "bringeth a ſnare." And God himſelf ſays, by the prophet Iſaiah, "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." In both places are meant bad and wicked men, who will laugh at the good and upright for their virtue and godlineſs, and try by their infamous ridicule, and reproaches, to make them as bad as themſelves. But never, I charge you, be afraid of them, or of their revilings. Never be aſhamed of ſerving God, and doing your duty. Good men will love and eſteem you for it, and God will reward you. "Them that honour him," he has declared that "he will honour." Though you may be deſpiſed and ſcoffed at on earth by the wicked and profane, you will be honoured in heaven before men and angels, and receive "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." This world is a ſtate of trial; and bad men are a trial to the good. They are a ſnare to us in many reſpects; but in none perhaps more, than by endeavouring to give a wrong turn to thoſe principles of ſhame and fear, which our Maker has implanted

implanted in us for the wiſeſt and beſt purpoſes. A ſenſe of ſhame was deſigned to keep us from ſin; or, if we have ſinned, to lead us to repentance. The fear of God was intended to keep us from offending him; to make us "hate evil," and "have reſpect unto all his commandments." Quite contrary to theſe are the falſe ſhame and fear, which the wicked wiſh, and endeavour, to inſtil into us: a ſhame of doing our duty, and a fear of being laughed at for it. But we may reſt aſſured, for our comfort, that God, who ſuffers us to be thus tried, will carry us ſafe through the trial, if we pray to him for his grace and aſſiſtance, and join thereto our own hearty endeavours. He has warned us of our danger, and ſhown us how to eſcape it. While we truſt in his power and goodneſs, and do our beſt to ſerve him in all holy and godly living, we have nothing to fear, and can have nothing to be aſhamed of. Let us therefore, after the example of St. Paul, approve ourſelves in all things as the faithful Servants of God; "by honour, and diſhonour; by evil report, and good report."—little ſolicitous about the treatment we meet with in *this* world; but "looking," with faith and patience, "for the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt," who ſhall "reward every man according to his works."

ADMONITION XXIV.

To the PARENTS.

EPHESIANS vi. 4.

——*Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

THE great uſefulneſs and neceſſity of a virtuous and religious education (which the apoſtle here enforces) are ſo very apparent, that I ſhould hope it were needleſs to ſay any thing to you in proof or confirmation of it. But the misfortune is, that the plaineſt truths, though ever ſo important, are often overlooked and diſregarded; perhaps merely becauſe they are plain. Let me however intreat you to conſider, ſeriouſly and frequently, how much it is both your duty and intereſt, to bring up your children in the ways of godlineſs, virtue, and induſtry; and how much your own happineſs, as well as their's, in this life, as well as in the next, will depend upon it. You ſeem indeed to be ſenſible of this, by ſending your children to partake of the inſtructions of our ſchool: and ſo far you do well. But alas! all we can do for them will ſignify little, unleſs you join your endeavours to our's to "train them up," and keep them, "in the way wherein they ſhould go;" and above all, unleſs you confirm by *your example* what they learn from *our precepts*. Children will

imitate their parents; and if they ſee at *home* a practice and behaviour quite contrary to what they are taught at *ſchool*, our labour will be loſt, and our beſt advice thrown away upon them. For their ſakes, therefore, as well as for your own, let me beg of you to be particularly circumſpect both in your words and actions: to refrain from every vicious and bad courſe, and to be patterns of whatever is good and praiſeworthy. Watch carefully over their behaviour, and when you ſee any thing wrong, check it immediately, that it may not grow into a bad habit. If at any time you obſerve a diſpoſition to lying, deceit, or thieving, reprove them ſharply; and if words will not do, you muſt have recourſe to the rod. But for leſſer faults, and careleſſneſs, a gentle and mild reproof is to be preferred. Hear them ſometimes read; and try, if poſſible, to make them remember what they read. Hear them ſay their prayers; and take care that they ſay them ſlowly, deliberately, and devoutly: the Lord's prayer particularly ſo, (*See* Admonition VII.) And do not forget, I intreat you, to add your own prayers to their's, and to our's, that it would pleaſe God to proſper the work we are engaged in; to make your children good and uſeful members of ſociety; a bleſſing and comfort to their parents and friends.

ADMONITION XXV.

To the PARENTS and others.

1 COR. v. 8.

Let us keep the feaſt.

IT is much to be lamented, that the feſtivals of the church, which were deſigned to anſwer the beſt purpoſes, are, by a ſad perverſion of them, made to ſerve the worſt. Of theſe there is none perhaps ſo groſsly abuſed, or ſo ſcandalouſly profaned, as that of Chriſtmas. A ſeaſon wiſely ſet apart for the commemoration of our bleſſed Lord's coming into the world, to "*deſtroy* the works of the Devil," is by too many made the occaſion of *promoting* them: and CHRIST, the great pattern and preacher of holineſs, is thereby made "the miniſter of ſin." What are commonly called (and would properly be ſo called, if rightly obſerved) the Chriſtmas *holy* days, become, by this ſhameful abuſe of them, the moſt *unholy* of all the days in the year: being ſpent in ſloth and idleneſs, in rioting and drunkenneſs, and in all manner of vice and debauchery. When we are called upon more particularly to remember our Saviour, and his exceeding great love and mercy towards us, we ſeem moſt of all to forget him, and to forfeit all pretenſions to his favour. When (as the apoſtle directs, and as our church teaches

teaches us to pray) we ſhould "*put off* the works of darkneſs," or ſin, we *run into them* "with greedineſs:" and when we ought, with peculiar care and zeal, to "put *on* the Lord Jeſus Chriſt," (that is, to adorn ourſelves with every Chriſtian grace and virtue) we may be ſaid to put him off, and by our conduct to renounce our holy profeſſion. Inſtead of obſerving a *Chriſtian* feſtival, we ſeem to copy after the *heatheniſh* rites of the antient Romans; who held a feaſt at the latter end of December, in which they were allowed to commit all ſorts of exceſs and licentiouſneſs. They indeed had ignorance to plead, and in ſome ſenſe acted in character, as being followers of falſe gods, who were in fact the inſtruments of Satan, and conſequently the patrons of ſin. But we, who worſhip the true God, know better, and are therefore without excuſe. We know that by every ſin we commit, we "blaſpheme that worthy," and holy, "name by which we are called." Better, I am ſure, far better it would be, that there were no holydays at all, than that they ſhould be kept in ſuch a manner as they are. Better to *forget* the birth of Chriſt altogether, than to *pretend* to *remember* it, and at the ſame time to act in direct oppoſition to the end and deſign of it. St. Paul, warning the Epheſians againſt the diſorderly and vicious people of his days, ſays, "it is a ſhame even to ſpeak of thoſe things which are done of them *in ſecret*." Surely it is a great ſhame to ſee and hear the things which are done and ſpoken by the rioters of our time *openly*, and in

public;

public; and this at a ſeaſon ſet apart for the exerciſe of religion and good works. It is ſhocking—it is ſcandalous——But let *us*, my brethren, "keep the feaſt" (every feſtival of our church in general, and this moſt ſacred one of Chriſtmas in particular) in a manner ſuitable to its nature and ſolemnity. Let us keep it, as the apoſtle directs, in "ſincerity and truth," that is, as an holy and religious feaſt. Beſides attending the public offices of the church, let us meditate in private on the great and undeſerved bleſſings as at this time derived from heaven, and conſider how we may make a right uſe of them, and a proper return for them. Let us employ our time, and our thoughts (a more delightful employment there cannot be) in contemplating the love of God in ſending his only-begotten Son into the world, to live, and to die, for us: and the love of Chriſt in coming, and giving himſelf a ranſom and ſacrifice for us. Let us ſilently admire and adore, as well as celebrate in the congregation of the faithful, the exceeding riches and wonders of his love and goodneſs towards us. And let it be our peculiar ſtudy at *this* time, as it ſhould be our conſtant endeavour at *all* times, to live as becomes the redeemed of the Lord. Kind and good offices to one another, *always* indeed ſeaſonable, are *now* more particularly ſo. "If God ſo loved us, we ought alſo to love one another;" and to ſhew our love by our actions. Our dear Redeemer, during his abode on earth, "went

about

about doing good." Let us follow his example, while we commemorate his birth.

But, you may ſay perhaps, " are our holydays to be paſſed wholly in acts of piety and charity?" Certainly not. Some time may, and ought to, be allowed for the ſocial meeting, the cheerful meal, and friendly converſation. Chriſtmas is juſtly accounted a joyful ſeaſon, and ought to be kept as ſuch. " Let the righteous" (*now* more eſpecially) " be glad and rejoice before God: let them alſo be merry and joyful." And, believe me, none but the righteous can be truly ſo.——To conclude: Do your duty to God and men; enjoy the company of your friends and neighbours; eat and drink with ſtrict temperance and ſobriety; and then you will not fail to have, what I heartily wiſh you, A COMFORTABLE AND AN HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

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